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**SC orders senators** to answer Villar suit by June 2

METRO / A18
**Complaints against** erring cops? Don't call hotline 117

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**Tears, anger of thousands** mourning Sokor's 'people's president'

SPORTS / A24
**LeBron keeps** Cavaliers' hopes afloat

## Comelec close to awarding P11.3-B contract for automation

By Marlon Ramos

AFTER THE LONE SURVIVING BIDDER in the P11.3 billion poll automation project huddled 24 of 26 criteria, the Commission on Elections (Comelec) last night said it was close to awarding the huge contract—if anyone deserved to win it.

The two tests still to be handled by the precinct count optical scan (PCOS) ma-

COMELEC A8

PHILIPPINE DAILY
# INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Saturday, May 30, 2009 ★★ 12 sections / Vol. 24 / No. 171 P18 online: www.inquirer.net

## DepEd wary of sex video in students' cell phones

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

WORRIED THE SEX video craze sweeping the country may find its way into the cell phones of students, the Department of Edu-

DEPED A6

# Ramos fumes at Palace

## Says merger done in haste by dictation, not by consultation

By Fe Zamora

THE MERGER OF THE RULING PARTIES LAKAS-CMD AND Kabalikat ng Malayang Pilipino (Kampi) was done in "undue haste" and "by dictation, not by consultation," former President Fidel V. Ramos said yesterday.

FOUNDING FATHER FOUNDERING Former President Fidel V. Ramos, Lakas founder and chair emeritus, raises some pointed questions during a press conference in his Makati office like: What happens now to the old Lakas and Kampi parties, each of which is accredited with the Comelec? What happens to the international character of Lakas-CMD, which is affiliated with the Christian Democrats International. Why was he informed that he was an inspirational speaker on the day itself?

### Opposition: It's merger of 'trapos'; it is a 'Palaka'

By Michael Lim Ubac

"BOBOLE."

That one word captures the opposition's reaction to the so-called marriage of the two biggest political parties in the country. The opposition also said the political union would not translate into votes to ensure the victory of administration candidates in 2010.

Sen. Mar Roxas said the merger of Lakas-CMD and the Kabalikat ng Malayang Pilipino (Kampi) was a union of trapos (traditional politicians).

Roxas, a presidential aspirant and the president of the Liberal Party, told reporters that the name of the new party was Palaka (Frog) for "Partidong Lakas ni Kampi."

Asked to explain, he replied with a frog's croak: "Kolak."

Sen. Francis Pangilinan said that no matter how they packaged themselves, administration officials "would be hard-pressed to convince the voters that they deserve six more years."

OPPOSITION A4

"I don't know why it's the tendency or culture of administration bigwigs to put up things in a hurry ... Pare (All instant ang mangyari (is what happens), pare madaliin yak in haste)," the elder statesman of the old Lakas said at a press conference in his office in Makati City.

"Why the undue haste? Is it because of a trip to Korea?" Ramos said in reference to President Macapagal-Arroyo's scheduled trip to South Korea on May 30-June 2.

He said he learned about the Thursday launch of the merger only from "a fax message from a friend."

Ramos, who arrived from the United States at dawn on Thursday, skipped the Lakas-Kampi-CMD affair at the Manila Hotel, where he was to have delivered an inspirational speech.

He said he put himself on "self-quarantine," as required of persons arriving from countries with known cases of the influenza A(H1N1) virus.

He also said he was informed that he was to be the inspirational speaker at the launch only on the day itself.

Ramos admitted that talks on the Lakas-Kampi merger had started in 2008.

He said he had "supported" the merger since then, but had believed that he wanted proper consultation with all stakeholders, "to be able to

RAMOS A4

## No party cracks, just 'birth pains'

By TJ Burgonio and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

RAH-RAH BOYS OF LAKAS-KAMPI-CMD yesterday made light of the boycott of the merger ceremony by key administration allies, and declared that the new ruling party would survive without some of them.

Prospero Pichay, the vice president for Mindanao and spokesperson of the old Lakas-CMD, acknowledged that the absence of such officials as Cabinet members Ray Lyn Villaberte or the Thursday launch of the merger was part of the new party's birth pains.

"There's no such thing as a perfect party. That happens to any party," Pichay, a former representative of Surigao del Sur, said on the phone.

NO PARTY A4

ENGLISH (ONLY) SPOKEN HERE Two Mara grade school teachers put English conversation balloons in comic strips at English camp in Cebu.

## Mindanao teachers stick to English in camp

SMILING, THE SECOND-GRADE TEACHER rested from a game that challenged her to fully use her English language skills.

Celeste Lechenaito of the Mandi Elementary School in Lutayan, Sultan Kudarat, traveled all the way to Mactan, Cebu, to join 132 other grade school teachers from Mindanao in a 12-day camp that promised to help them improve their English in time for the school opening in June.

The English Language Camp helped the teacher-campers practice their English language skills using educational games and other activities on persuasive speaking, interviewing, using idioms, reading and retelling stories, creating and enacting newscasts, hosting, debating, creative writing, role playing, conversation, and vocabulary building.

It also improved their oral, listening, reading, writing, teaching methodology, and computer skills using experiential and learner-centered approaches.

The camp was organized by the United States Peace Corps' Tadle (Teach) Mindanao Program in cooperation with the Education Quality and Access for Learning and Livelihood Skills (EQuALLS3) Project of the US Agency for International Development (USAID).

It has a strict "stick to English" policy.

Sydney Mertz is one of the 16 US Peace Corps Philippines volunteers who co-facilitate the camp along with graduates of past camps.

Said Jenefe Gaspar, her co-facilitator and a teacher from Alicia, Zamboanga Sibugay: "In [the] camp, we want to make teachers at ease with the English language. This is all about confidence building. It is much easier to learn English with a native speaker [like

MINDANAO A6

## Christmas in May for 2 lotto bettors

By Julie M. Aurelio

WHILE MOST OF THEIR COUNTRYmen are queuing for jobs and thinking up various money-making schemes, two Filipinos will be swimming in millions for having the knack for picking lucky numbers.

It was a random but lucky choice of numbers for the 21-year-old salesgirl who won half of the P188-million jackpot in the 6/49 Superlotto draw on Thursday night.

The bettor, who bought her ticket in Sta Maria, Bulacan, had been playing the popular game of chance for only a week and did not even have a favorite combination of numbers.

CHRISTMAS A4

## 2 more wedding guests in Zambales get A(H1N1)

By Dona Pazzibugan

IF WAS ONE WEDDING THAT ON hindsight, they probably should have skipped.

The number of confirmed cases of influenza A(H1N1)—more commonly known as swine flu—in the country has climbed to 14 as the Department of Health reported four more cases yesterday, eight days after the first case was confirmed.

Worldwide, the number of cases has soared past 13,000 with the number of deaths nearing 100.

Health Secretary Francisco Duque III said two of the new cases in the Philippines—a 42-year-old woman and a 28-year-old man—were at a May 17 wedding in Zambales attended by a Taiwanese mother and her daughter, who were later found carrying the virus upon their return to Taipei.

That means eight of the 14 confirmed cases were people at the wedding, according to the Department of Health. The DOH previously said there were about 50 people at the wedding.

The rest of the confirmed cases in the country had traveled abroad, including two of the new cases: a 7-year-old girl and a 19-year-old woman who had returned from travel in the United States.

Thirteen of the 14 confirmed cases are Filipinos, including the four new ones, according to the DOH.

Duque said all the 14 confirmed cases had shown "relatively mild symptoms and all are responding positively to treatment" with the anti-viral drug

2 MORE A4

DISASTER REDUCTION ENVOY Sen. Loren Legarda, Regional Champion of the United Nations International Strategy on Disaster Reduction, meets with Prime Minister Jigme Y. Thinley of the Kingdom of Bhutan where Legarda is to keynote the workshop on disaster reduction to be attended by UN officials and the kingdom's VIPs. Legarda also talks to the PM on Bhutanese philosophy on Gross National Happiness.

WEATHER FORECAST

TODAY

| | |
|---|---|
| Baguio | Mostly cloudy |
| Tuguegarao | Mostly cloudy |
| Laoag | Mostly cloudy |
| Metro Manila | Mostly cloudy |
| Legazpi | Mostly cloudy |
| Tacloban City | Mostly cloudy |
| Iloilo | Mostly cloudy |
| Cebu | Mostly cloudy |
| Zamboanga | Mostly cloudy |
| Davao | Mostly cloudy |
| Cagayan de Oro | Mostly cloudy |
| Surigao | Mostly cloudy |

Second FRONTPAGE

EZ2 (Results as of 9:30 p.m.): 15 7 28 44

SUERTRES (Results as of 2 p.m.): 3 6 9 / 1 1 6 / 7 5 5 6 / 4 1 9

FOUR DIGIT

MEGALOTTO 6/45: 3 18 13 16 32 41

P55,664,910.00

# Answer Villar suit, SC tells Senate

## But High Court won't issue TRO

By Dona Pazzibugan and Michael Lim

THE SUPREME COURT EN BANC HAS TOLD THE SENATE COMmittee of the whole represented by Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile to formally respond to the petition for injunction filed by Sen. Manuel Villar Jr. and five allies who are seeking to stop the Senate from conducting an ethics inquiry on Villar.

The Supreme Court gave the Senate committee of the whole until June 2 to submit its comment.

"Considering the allegations contained and the issues raised and the arguments addressed to the petition, it is necessary and proper to require the respondent (Senate committee of the whole) to comment on the subject petition not later than 9 a.m. of June 2, 2009 without any extension," the tribunal said in a resolution.

Prior to initial ethics committee vote, the Senate convened into a committee of the whole to take up the allegation of Sen. Ana Consuelo Madrigal that Villar had introduced double funding in the 2008 national budget for the construction of the C-5 road project that would benefit the latter's and other holdings.

### Tailor-made vs Villar

Villar and other members of the Senate minority bloc—Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr., Juan Ponce Enrile, Francis Pangilinan, Pia Cayetano and Alan Cayetano—asked the Supreme Court on May 25 to stop the Senate committee of the whole from hearing the conflict-of-interest complaint against Villar.

They claimed that the transfer of the complaint from the ethics committee to the committee of the whole violated Villar's constitutional right to equal protection.

They also claimed that the rules adopted by the Senate committee of the whole were "tailor-made" to fit Villar's case.

"The Senate committee of the whole's ongoing investigation and hearing of complaint against Senator Villar under its arbitrary rules constitutes grave abuse of discretion that could lead to an unconstitutional, oppressive and illegal distraction to the said complaint," the petitioners said.

The tribunal's directive prompted Enrile yesterday to ask the majority bloc to delay the investigation.

### It doesn't follow

The trial, or adjudicatory hearings, will commence on Monday.

Arroyo said it was incumbent upon the Senate majority to defer the public trial of Villar although no temporary restraining order had been issued by the court.

"No, it doesn't follow that just because there's no TRO, you proceed. The Supreme Court said, 'you file an answer,' for example ... you compel ... you proceed with the case. That's an act of disrespect for the Supreme Court.

"Effectively, the hearings on June 1 and on June 4 scheduled by the committee of the whole should, as a matter of course, be deferred. Otherwise, the Supreme Court proceedings be rendered meaningless," Arroyo said.

Arroyo, a lawyer, said the chamber should exercise caution in handling the ethics complaint lodged against Villar.

### Commendable speed

"Gusto nyo Supreme Court exercises jurisdiction over a case, out of deference to the high court, the parties, exercising abundance of prudence, should refrain from proceeding with the case to enable the court to look into it," said Arroyo.

The senator commended the high court for "acting with commendable speed" on the petition.

Pimentel also welcomed the SC order. "It's a step forward to have counsels relied on both," he said.

Orders and tables were rearranged in the Senate yesterday in preparation for Monday's trial.

The Senate committee of the whole has reserved a desk, which will serve as a witness stand, for Villar.

The desk was placed on an elevated platform directly facing the rest of the presiding officers.

## *Pagasa: It'll be rainy on opening day*

By Alison Pupa

PARENTS SHOULD BE WILL TO equip their children with raincoats and umbrellas on the first day of classes as the weather bureau has said there is a high potential for rain on Monday.

Nathaniel Cruz, deputy administrator of the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa), said a monsoon trough over Luzon was likely to bring rains for the next five days over Luzon and the Visayas.

The "is expected to prevail in the next 3 to 5 days," Pagasa said in a weather outlook sent out noon today.

A monsoon trough, Cruz explained, is a meeting of winds from the northeast and southwest that causes cloudy weather and rain. The weather system is similar to the Intertropical convergence zone (ITCZ), where it is the meeting which that point.

"The monsoon trough will enhance the southwesterly flow bringing rainshowers and thunderstorms over Northern and Central Luzon today (Friday) and tomorrow (Saturday). Then it will shift southwards and affect Southern Luzon, including Metro Manila and the Visayas by Sunday and Monday and cause inclement weather in these areas," the weather bureau said.

Nesz Pichetti, the Pagasa weather forecaster, said the monsoon trough is enhancing the southwest monsoon over Mindanao, bringing rains to that region.

The sudden control on the week is another twist to the weather patterns in Ilimeo Manila and other parts of the country had been experiencing for months to the past week.

Pagasa said it has spotted a low-pressure area—a weather condition that brings rains and clouds—and is the on the big point of storms—900 kilometers east of Mindanao.

## Schools open on Monday

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr. and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

CLASSES IN PUBLIC ELEMENTARY AND HIGH schools throughout the country will open as scheduled on Monday despite the growing number of confirmed cases of the influenza A (H1N1) virus, Education Secretary Jesli Lapus said yesterday.

"We have been working closely with the Department of Health (DoH), and based on their recommendation, there is no need to postpone the opening of classes because of the issue," Lapus said in a statement released by the Department of Education.

The DOH said yesterday that the number of confirmed H1N1 cases in the country has reached 14. (See related story on page 1.)

Interviewed by phone from Cagayan de Oro City where he is on a related inspection tour, Lapus said there were no changes in the original schedule "as of now."

He said the latest advisory that he got from the DOH was that "there is no need to panic."

### No drastic steps

"We are not taking any drastic steps so far," he said.

Several legislators have urged the government to postpone the opening of classes on Monday because of the swine flu outbreak.

Muntinlupa Rep. Marcelino R. Teodoro said that the opening of classes in public schools on June 1—classes in most private schools open on June 10—should be delayed to prevent the spread of the virus. He warned that children are the most vulnerable to the virus.

Teodoro told the DOH must give the DOH time to intensify its public awareness guidelines on the virus among parents and set up temperature-reading areas in the schools.

"It is better to be safe than sorry," said Teodoro, party-list member Lucimindo Rapsa, who similarly urged a postponement of the school opening.

### Stronger defense vs virus

Solicitor Andrew Ney Cruz For Manapalondon urged the education and health departments and local government units to step up coordination efforts in order to put up a stronger defense against the spread of the virus.

But House Speaker Prospero Nograles said he was for letting the agencies concerned decide on the issue of postponing the school opening as they were in a better position to address the problem.

Last week, the DepEd released a memorandum to immunize the information campaign and monitoring to prevent the virus in public schools.

### Safe drive

The senior, which came with a four-page information sheet about H1N1, directed the creation of action task forces in the regional, division and district levels. It also ordered school health and nutrition personnel to disseminate information about the virus to pupils and teachers.

It also directed the establishment of H1N1 hotlines in all regional and division offices.

It ordered teachers to work with their communities and local officials not only in the information drive but also in identifying residents of the community who have come from H1N1-affected areas.

The DepEd unit in Cebu Safe Schools Command Center in Pasig will be coordinating quake and tsunami until June 5.

The public may contact the command center hotlines: 636-1663, 6311992, 6340222, 6350917, 6401601, 6364880, 6360358, 6367329, 6367330, 6367331 and 7903232. They may also send their name, address and query via text to 09396580607 or 2832.

## GMA leaves today for Korea, Russia

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO is leaving before noon today for official visits to South Korea and Russia but only after inaugurating a P1-billion flyover leading to the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

Ms Arroyo and her delegation will depart for Seoul on a chartered Philippine Airlines flight at past 11 a.m. today, Malacañang said.

Prior to late Night, Ms Arroyo will inaugurate the Ninoy Aquinoverway Flyover which connects the South Luzon Expressway and the Manuel Manila Skyway with the international airport's passenger terminals.

The flyover is expected to cut down travel time to and from the international airport, and benefit food and freight passengers.

In her two-day visit to South Korea, Ms Arroyo is scheduled to meet with South Korean President Lee Myung Bak, and then take part in the Seoul Republic of Korea Commonwealth Summit.

She is seeking the end notwithstanding the tension stirred by North Korea's nuclear tests, and the global threat of swine flu, officials said.

This official will be a chance for the two leaders to discuss the state of bilateral relations and to "chart a new direction for the next 50 years of mutually beneficial future," Press Secretary Cerge Remonde said.

The two countries are marking the 50th year of their diplomatic relations this year, which Mr. Arroyo has declared as Philippines-South Korea Friendship Year.

Trade between the two countries is pegged at $1.06 billion. More than $1 billion in Korean investments top the list of foreign indirect investments in the country.

Ms Arroyo is also set to attend the Asia-South Korea summit on Jeju Island on June 1 and 2, and affirm the Philippines' collaboration with South Korea and the rest of the region vis-a-vis the global economic downturn.

From South Korea, Ms Arroyo and her party will proceed to Russia for a visit from June 4 to 6, where she will speak at the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum, among others, according to officials.

0.4% IS STILL GROWTH

# Palace: We're not on verge of recession

THE GOVERNMENT'S ECONOMIC MANagers will see a silver lining in the economy's weakened growth—the Philippines is still doing better than most of its Southeast Asian neighbors.

"We expected a contraction, especially the GDP (gross domestic product). But the good news is, that 0.4 percent growth is still a growth. In the midst of global recession where 79 percent of countries in the world are in recession, the Philippines still posted a growth," Undersecretary Anthony Golez said over dzBB.

The National Statistical Coordination Board reported that the economy grew by 4 percent from January to March, prompting FINCH Secretary General Romulo Virola to remark that the economy was now starting to recover.

Golez, deputy presidential spokesperson, theorized the GDP would contract for the second consecutive quarter and bring the country into a recession, arguing that the government's economic resiliency plan would offset the global downturn.

"I don't think recession will hit us because President Arroyo had diagnosed it early. That's why since last year, the government has been pump-priming the economy," he said.

### Modest growth

While it posted a modest growth in the first quarter, the Philippines fared better than its neighbors in the region. Socio-Economic Planning Undersecretary Rolando Reggodon said.

In the first quarter, Singapore posted a minus 10.1 percent growth; Taiwan minus 10.2 percent; Hong Kong minus 7.8 percent; Thailand minus 7 percent; and Malaysia minus 6.2 percent, he said.

"China posted a 6.1 growth...While the growth has been down, it was coming from a high of 9.5percent," he said in a briefing in Malacañang.

If it all, the growth of the GDP and the gross national product under the Arroyo administration surpassed the record of the country's four former Presidents, Undersecretary Gay Oliver said.

During the Macos, Aquino, Ramos and Estrada administrations, the average annual growth rate ranged from 3.4% to 4.2 percent for GDP (gross national product), and from 2.9 to 3.9 percent for GDP, said the deputy presidential spokesperson on economic affairs.

But under President Macapagal-Arroyo, GDP growth averaged 5.3 percent, and GDP 6 percent, he said.

### Comfort in long term

"If you look at the short-term problems we have now, we can take a lot of comfort in the long-and-historical record. In order to get to the long term, we need to work hand-of-the-deal now and build the recovery that will be coming soon for us," he said in the same briefing.

Echoing Reggodon, Oliver reminded us recession for the country, pointing out the impact of spending of overseas workers' remittances by their families back home and government spending would likely be felt in the coming months.

Besides, there's growing consensus among economists that global recession would bottom out this year, he added.

"We're not in a depression, and we're not tracking us recession," he said.

Reggodon said: "With consumer and business confidence improving in May we do not see why the April-June performance would be worse than the first quarter performance."

# Ronnie Puno replaced as PAOCC vice chair

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-Arroyo has replaced Local Government Secretary Ronaldo Puno as vice chairman of the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Commission (PAOCC) as part of its recent reorganization.

Mr Arroyo issued Executive Order No. 790 on May 14 replacing Puno with Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez as vice chair of the PAOCC.

The executive order relegates the local government secretary as a member.

According to the order, the commission's membership has been updated several times "to counter the pervasive influence" of organized crime and strengthen coordination among agencies fighting crime.

EO 790 amends Section 1 of EO 557, which spelled out the composition of the PAOCC.

Under EO 557, the President sat as chair of the PAOCC; the local government secretary as vice chair; the National Security Adviser and secretaries of justice, defense, transportation and foreign affairs; and four representatives from the private sector.

EO 557 was issued in December 2007 to amend EO 408 and reorganize the membership of the PAOCC.

The commission was created to give focus and "substantive results" in the government's campaign to root out criminality.

In the last few months, Puno has had his hands full trying to find solutions to the abduction of three aid workers of the International Committee of Red Cross in Jolo and of three workers in Isabela by the Abu Sayyaf bandits.

The workers were turned over to local officials last Tuesday. Two of the three Red Cross workers were earlier freed, leaving Italian Eugenio Vagni in the hands of the bandits.

Early this week, Puno announced his pledge to seek the nomination of the administration merged party Lakas Kampi CMD as its candidate for vice president in the May 2010 elections.

# Ramos fumes at Palace: Merger done in haste

Front page A1

ments and make concessions on the merger agreement in the form of the constitution ratified by the merged parties."

According to Ramos, the plan to formalize the Lakas-Kampi merger was ratified in a conference of the two in a meeting in March 2008.

He said another meeting was held in March 2009, when it was agreed that the merger should be finalized "as soon as possible," and not later than July 27, when Ms. Arroyo is to deliver her State of the Nation Address.

Before he left for the United States early this month, Ramos was shown a draft of the merger agreement and observed that GMA (for Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo) was omitted from the name of the merged party.

### Clarification needed

He told the told Gabriel Claudio, Mr. Arroyo's political adviser, "Bert CMD must not get lost because that is the basic philosophy of the opposition bloc."

Ramos said he also wanted to be clarified about what would happen to the old Lakas and Kampi parties after the merger.

He pointed out that Lakas-CMD was accredited by the Commission on Elections.

"Can a general meeting with lots of photo ops wipe out the Lakas-CMD? I don't think so," he said.

The party used by Ramos when he ran for president in 1992 was initially named Lakas Tao.

### Lakas loses int'l character

That name was changed to Lakas-Nationalist Union of Christian Democrats-Union of Muslim Democrats of the Philippines (Lakas NUCD-UMDP), only later to Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats (Lakas-CMD).

The party is affiliated with the Christian Democratic International (CDI), according to Ramon Fangonilan Ong and former Speaker Jose de Venecia is the vice chair of the CDI philosophy committee, and the chair of CDI-Asia Pacific.

"What happens to the international character of Lakas if we let the merger?" Ramos said.

# No party cracks, just 'birth pains'; 'no one is indispensable'

Front page A1

IN HIS OWN WORDS "Can a general meeting with lots of photo ops wipe out the Lakas-CMD? I don't think so," former President Ramos says during his press conference on Thursday. (DOVE ZABLAN)

"There are no cracks," he said, adding that even the United Nationalist Alliance (UNA) and the Liberal Party were born by questions of unity.

"If there's any party that's wracked, it's the opposition," Pichay said, referring to 1986 leader and former President Joseph Estrada's feuds with his party-mates opposition figures.

### Cracks in head

Speaker Prospero Nograles also denied that the new party was showing bullishness. He said: "Those who see the cracks are looking at something else. It's in their head. We are solid. They are the ones cracking," he said at a press conference.

Lakas-Kampi-CMD now accounts for 72 percent of all elected officials from local governance to national positions, according to Nograles.

"Even if you take out 20 percent of our members—the maximum margin of error—we still will have a 52 percent share," he said.

An exhilarated President Macapagal-Arroyo hopened the ceremony that formalized the merger. Lakas said the rebellion of Makiyang Filipino (Kampi).

### Not indispensable

But the laurels of what was described as a "powerhouse party" were snared by the absence of such stalwarts as Kampi pioneer Ronaldo Zamora, Senator Pimentel and Lakas founder Fidel V. Ramos, and Lakas vice president Raul Roco.

Asked if the new party could live without Villafuerte, who had played a key role in the merger but later abandoned it, Pichay said: "This man is indispensable. The party is so institutional it's not about personalities."

But he said Villafuerte "is a big asset" and that Lakas-Kampi-CMD preferred the latter in the party.

Still, Pichay echoed other party spokesmen in saying that even without Villafuerte, most of the local officials belonging to the old Kampi joined up at the launch.

Villafuerte opted out of the merger because the personalities in the bid to, including the resolution of local conflicts and the nomination of provincial, city and municipal chiefs, were not met.

### Going to NPC?

He also rejected an offer for him to serve as the vice chair of the new party, and declared he would not run for re-election.

He has announced that he was likely to hook up with another party, reportedly the Nationalist People's Coalition (NPC).

Speaker Nograles said that if Kampi's Villafuerte and Lakas' Drilon leave the party, four de Venecia had indeed pulled out, they were campaigning their move long before the merger.

"That has been predictable and predicted," he said.

### Unbranded

Pichay also said it was understandable that Ramos would skip the party launch, having gone on self-quarantine after flying to from the United States early on Thursday. (Story on Page A1.)

Nograles said he did not expect Ramos to abandon Lakas-Kampi-CMD because "we have never given him any reason to abandon us."

At his Fernando, Pichay expressed doubts that the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority chair and pro-Arroyo economic czar would bolt the new party. "He's not leaving."

To Fernando's claims that the party seemed more inclined to back outsiders like Vice President Noli de Castro and Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro over himself in the selection of standard-bearer, Pichay said: "There's no such thing as selection. We've not even created the selection committee or started the selection process."

"Definitely, the party will give him a fair chance," Pichay said.

### Poor survey ratings

In Pichay's reckoning, Fernando's poor survey ratings may be an offshoot of his prominent announcement of his plans to seek the presidency.

Pichay admitted that some party officials were belittling Fernando's "candidacy" but quickly said that was not the party stand. He declined to name names.

He said Fernando belonged to "a new breed of politicians."

"What has the pakinot will do to other's right now? It's unpopular? Pichay said, referring to Fernando's unpopular utterance to raise traffic in the metropolis. "He's a man of few words, a man of action. I salute him."

### Wide-open field

Nograles said Lakas-Kampi-CMD would have "a wide-open field" of candidates for the 2010 elections.

He said the party's announced one could come from the "perceived elites of the administration" or the top possible presidential contenders in the survey, and that the choice would not be limited to its members (such as Fernando) and those being eyed by its members (such as De Castro and Teodoro).

"We will be open to any perceived ally of the administration," I think the field is wide-open. We will develop [candidates] gradually. As of now, we aren't [consider] those who will run for senators, not just those who are interested now," Nograles said.

### Administration allies

He declined to name who the party perceived as administration allies among the top possible contenders in the survey—De Castro and Senators Manuel Villar, Loren Legarda, Francis Escudero, Manny Pacquiao and Panfilo Lacson.

"I already mentioned [names of] who are interested," he said.

When asked if, for example, the NPC's Eusebio would be adopted by Lakas-Kampi-CMD, Nograles said: "We in the House have a very good alliance with NPC, which can be duplicated nationally."

Nograles also pointed out that "joint" approval is shown in the administration slates in the 2004 and 2007 elections, where independents were allowed to run under the administration banner.

### United front

At the Thursday launch, Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno said the Lakas-Kampi-CMD slate would sweep the 2010 polls because of the party's united front.

"There are more things that unite us than divide us. There are more dreams that bring us together than take us apart," said Puno, who has declared his intention to seek the party's nomination as its vice presidential candidate in 2010.

The interim officers of the new party are to be appointed by Mr. Arroyo, according to Nograles.

Regular elections for the party positions will be held after the 2010 polls in order to keep the party unity for the next 12 months.

# Opposition: It's merger of 'trapos'; it's a 'Palaka'

Front page A1

"They represent more of the same, and more of the same has not worked," Pangilinan said.

"The only way to defeat money politics it for the people to rise up and stage an electoral revolt," he added.

Even worse, the opposition was not threatened by the merger because it only formally brought together all the supporters of President Macapagal-Arroyo and "all those who want to continue with [her] policies that have long been discredited by the people."

He said his party was open to a coalition with "all those who want change and upright and righteous governance of our country."

### Political suicide

According to Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr., the Lakas-Kampi merger was merely "emulated" because of the attempt of such administration stalwarts as Former President Fidel V. Ramos, Commission on Appointments Chair Manuel Villar, and Metropolitan Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando.

"In other words, there is no exclusivity at all. But the merger will hold when the time comes," Pimentel said.

He added: "I think that strategically, the two parties have adopted a policy of political suicide considering that no matter what they do, if they are not identified with the administration, they are to be a shoo-in 2010."

But Pimentel admitted that the opposition was in a similar situation.

"The opposition will, therefore, get its act together so that it will not be too divided than it is now," he said. "Maybe if you can reduce the presidential aspirants from seven to two, that is better than having seven or five."

Asked whether the opposition presidential aspirant could declare a truce to pave the way for unity talks, Pimentel said: "That is easier said than done. These people are already committed; they are already beat-or-running. It's difficult."

He proposed that the presidential aspirants thresh things out in a national convention.

In Asuncion City, former President Joseph Estrada held that the Lakas-Kampi merger is just a publicity stunt.

"From the very start, Kampi and Lakas were one. It's all one de GMA (Mr Arroyo)," he said.

### Nothing new

Estrada's camp here yesterday for the first leg of his bonding trip to western Pangasinan, which is part of his Lakbay Pagmamahal (Breakthrough tour).

He was accompanied by his vice President Jose Peter Emilio Ejercito, Senator Jinggoy Estrada and other officials.

"There's nothing new in it. As you have seen in the 2004 election, [the two parties] were opposites. In the 2007 [election], they were also together," Estrada said.

Estrada said the merged party would eventually weaken because local party members would scramble for positions in the coming elections.

"In the provinces, cities and towns, it would be difficult because Lakas has members and Kampi also has members. They all have ambitions, so for sure, they will squabble in the elections. The party will surely weaken," Estrada told reporters.

He said the eventual decline of the merged party would be advantageous to the opposition if the two parties will not resolve their differences.

He compared the situation to the Estrada-Arroyo Party's predicament in the past years when its members ran for the same positions.

### No discipline

Estrada observed that the opposition was similarly divided.

"There's no party discipline in the opposition—that's the problem. And we're talking about different parties competing, including the political opposition—the Nacionalista Party, Liberal Party, Puwersa ng Masang Pilipino and others," he said.

But Estrada said he hoped that the opposition parties would merge and field a common presidential candidate in 2010.

"By July or August, we'll have a [convention]. If there's a merger, there's a possibility that there will be only one presidential candidate because that's what I've been fighting for," he said, adding:

"We must learn a lesson from the 2004 presidential election. If FPJ (the late senior Fernando Poe Jr. who lost to Mr Arroyo in that election) was the only opposition candidate, he could have been the runaway winner."

Inside and until next year's presidential race could be like the one in 1992, when there were several presidential candidates.

"We may be electing a misery president again," he said, referring to Fidel V. Ramos. Shinzaka was elected vice president in 1992.)

Estrada said the segment for the 2010 presidential election appeared to be more than the senatorial segment.

### Ahead in the game

"And [with many candidates], it will be a disadvantage to both the administration and opposition parties," he said.

At the launch of Lakas-Kampi-CMD on Thursday, Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno said the administration camp was now ahead in the political game with 70-80 percent of its member local officials brought under one party.

"Do you expect them to unite?" Erstwhile of the opposition in an interview after the merger was formalized in a ceremony at the Quezon Memorial Circle.

He added: "I don't see anybody doubting the victory of [Lakas-Kampi-CMD]. Let other parties equal this exercise. What Nacionalista Party, what Liberal Party wing of Franklin Drilon and Frenzel? What other party of Senator [Ruffy] Lacson?

"If they can come together ... but is that highly probable?" Erstwhile cited the "convincing alliance" of the administration party with the Nationalist People's Coalition of Senator Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco.

"What conglomeration of parties can [oppose] us? Remember, Danding is also an ally," Estrada said. With a report from Gabriel Cardenas and Melissa de Jesus, Inquirer Northern Luzon

# *Christmas in May for 2 lotto bettors*

Front page A1

"It's really all random numbers, and the old set have ran numbers (in succession). Maybe because the last one been playing for a week," said Dr. Larry Cedro, the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office spokesperson.

Cedro said the 23-year-old went to the PCSO's Quezon City office yesterday afternoon to claim her prize.

The lucky bettor only bet P20 on a single ticket but ended up taking home P94,077,269.20, which she said she would share with her parents and siblings.

### Still unclaimed

The rest of the money will go into a savings account, Cedro said.

"We just don't know if she is a colleague at that Wednesday," she said. She said she is not from that particular town (Sta Rita), the PCSO official added, declining to reveal where the winner lived for security reasons.

The other lucky bettor who bought his or her ticket from a lotto outlet in Montilla Street in Pasay had not yet claimed the prize as of late yesterday afternoon, Cedro said.

The PCSO said the bettor correctly guessed the winning combination of 20-03-47-49-08-19, with a set of P680,153,137.60 that had accumulated since April 10.

Cedro, who lives in Bulacan, said jokingly that he was one slide to win the jackpot as he had bought his ticket in Cagayan de Oro during an out-of-town trip.

"Now I wish that I was the one who bought that winning ticket in Bulacan," he said.

Thursday's total take for the 6/49 Superlotto draw reached P114 million, Cedro said they quite easily breached their initial target of P103 million Thursday night.

### Other winners

But even if only two winners shared the P680-million jackpot, Cedro said there were 123,693 bettors who correctly guessed three to five numbers right.

There were 113 winners for the 5 of 6 combination, 6,392 for the 4 of 6, and 113,907 for the 3 of 6 combination. The total payout for the consolation prizes amounted to P34,891,700.

The jackpot for the 6/49 Superlotto will revert to the original prize of P30 million on Sunday.

### Winner from Pasig

This is the second time this year that the pot for the popular game breached the P600-mark. Last month, in February, two winners from Pasig and Caloocan City shared the biggest prize ever at P387 million.

The winner from Pasig has not yet claimed his or her prize, Cedro said.

In April 2008, a construction worker from Navaltenas, Quezon City, took home P268 million, the new second biggest jackpot prize ever in the 6/49 Superlotto game.

Winners have a year to claim their prizes. Cedro reminded the lucky bettors to sign their name at the back of the ticket and to ensure that it is undamaged.

SCOTT ANSON-ROA reads to children of movie workers' workers, some children and kids with disabilities. NOEL ACTON

# Read Along: Movie stories from movie stars

By Kate V. Pedroso and Sylvert Quedala
Inquirer Research

STORIES THAT HAVE MADE IT TO THE BIG screen reached children in the Pasig Along session last Saturday, which featured veteran actress Rosie Ann Roa, child star Ella Guevara and returning Malaysian storyteller Kak Rodziyah as readers.

The session was attended by about 60 children, half of whom were children of members of Movie Workers' Welfare Foundation (MoverMed), where Roa is executive director. They were joined by 30 participants with disabilities from the Jose Reyes Foundation, a facility of Orthotic Foundation, Inc., which is composed by Hand Clinic Manila, more also to be said more.

Guevara, 10, who appears in the popular telenovela "Sana Dati," kicked off the program with the Filipino folk tale "Bunga Sahara" published by Adarna House, while Rosie read "Urduja," an unpublished storybook about a legendary warrior princess of Pangasinan.

Last year, "Urduja" was made into an animated movie by producers ABS Entertainment, which also prepared the storybook for a special Pasig Along session just before the film opened in cinemas in June.

Incidentally, Roa herself was also featured in the animated movie "Adarna" in 2007.

CHILD ACTRESS Ella Guevara gives a Read Along participant. NOEL ACTON

## Good for the kids

Rodziyah, Almighty Storyteller president, capped the session with "Ang Makinarang Hayuk" from Stories from Kids Hotsong series, retold by Christine Bellen and published by Anvil. It is the story of a magical violin given to a kind-wishing boy named Rodziyah.

Siblings Ed and Jo Ignacio came to the Read Along with Mountbatten members. Their father is an assistant director. "I enjoyed the session very much. Rosie Ann was very funny. He was a very good actor," said 9-year-old Jo.

His sister, 11-year-old Ed, agreed: "All of the readers were very good. It was our first time to attend something like this. I did not imagine that reading can be this fun."

Meanwhile, 7-year-old Jessica Montemayor came with her cousin, 5-year-old Joey Lee, and their grandfather, a grammar supervisor in taping and events. "I liked the Read Along. It was very lively and interactive. I want to attend more sessions," Montemayor said.

"Special children need socialization so we bring them to events like this," said Volunteer volunteer Wing Bautista.

## Her first time

"Our kids have emotional pulls or habits some are visually impaired, hearing-impaired or mentally disabled. It takes a lot of effort to relate to special children. However, the Read Along storytellers were able to get their attention. The stories were told with action—they're very visual—so even the hearing-impaired were able to grasp the story. I myself may find it for (for) us," the child.

Guevara, who came to the session with her father, Dennis, and younger sister, 4-year-old Thea, revealed it was her first time to read to other children.

"I really enjoyed reading the story. I liked interacting with the kids," said Guevara, an incoming Grade 5 student at the Asia Learning Academy in Antipolo.

A self-confessed bookworm, she added: "Reading helps with a lot of things, like improving one's grammar. With reading, you don't only learn, you also enjoy yourself."

Roa, on the other hand, was accompanied by his two favorite girls: daughter Chiqui Roa-Puno, who works as a news anchor, and granddaughter Adriana, who's 2 years old.

"It was really fun. It made me relax. It's really different when you're with kids. It's amazing how children can be so interactive. This is a really beautiful project," Roa said.

"Because of computers, the art of reading is slowly disappearing. It's so sad! There is a scientist will come and go but reading will always be here. Reading has a different impact, because it stays with you," she added.

## Developmental reading

Grand Mebuillas, an instructor of teaching proficiency at the Laguna State Polytechnic University in Los Baños, came with nine of his students to observe Saturday's Read Along session.

"We are studying developmental reading and my students have a storytelling project. I thought it would be a good idea for them to see how storytelling is done professionally. It is interesting how the readers were able to relate to such a diverse audience. It was exhilarating, educational and fun experience," he said.

Last Saturday's session, hosted by Jessica Independencia and Ruth Marasigan, was held in cooperation with Powerhouse Toys. Nickelodeon and Hands On Manila. The children were treated to Krispy Kreme donuts and Nestle Crunch by Del Monte Monkey Gap.

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# AFP to move soldiers from desks to battlefield

IN A BID TO MEET A 2010 DEADLINE TO end the communist insurgency, the military has announced a reduction in the number of soldiers working at headquarters for deployment to the battlefield.

The purpose of the directive, from retired Brawn Chief Lt. Gen. Victor Ibrado is to bring active soldiers from the station to field duties that the communist New People's Army (NPA), the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines, and AFP spokesperson Lt. Col. Romeo Brawner Jr.

The plan is to move more than 1,000 military personnel assigned to AFP offices and headquarters across the country to military operating units, he said.

"The movement will be done as soon as possible after the commanders have determined the feasibility of their manning," he said.

The order to recall the number of forces in the battle zones was also in response to a "depleted work force" in the fight against communist rebels, Brawner said.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has ordered the military to crush the communist insurgency by 2010, a deadline that the military would most likely meet, said Maj. Gen. Carlos Holganza, the deputy chief of staff for operations.

"We have a lot of forces which are not right now optimized in the way in their manning numbers up, units, such as the garrison units, personnel of the Navy and the Air Force, we will be cutting out of them," said Holganza last Monday.

From 7,187 MBA fighters in 2006, government troops were able to reduce the number to 4,874 as of this month, Holganza said.

In the past three years, the military has signed over 23 peace pacts, bringing down the number to 75 this year, he said.

The military intends to dismantle 23 more guerrilla fronts by the end of the year, said Holganza. Jocelyn R. Ju

FANCY THAT President Arroyo cuts the ceremonial ribbon to open Fantasyland in Davao, Digdiar City in Zamboanga del Norte, escorted by Ramos (alcejos Cleofas (left), the convicted rapist who was the recent beneficiary of a presidential pardon. Also in photo are Gov. Rolando Yebes, Rep. Cecilia Jalosjos-Carreon and Digdiar Mayor Dominador Jalosjos.

WARM WELCOME Jalosjos welcomes the guest of honor at the opening of his latest resort in Digdiar City.

# Gov't's cash-for-school grants start in June

By Nikko Dizon

JUST IN TIME FOR THE OPENING of classes next week, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) has announced that the distribution of grants to beneficiaries in provinces included in the so-called responsible areas of the government's conditional cash transfer program will start in June.

The program, called the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps), is aimed at encouraging very poor families to keep their children in school and take them to health centers regularly in exchange for a modest cash allowance.

President Macapagal-Arroyo was expected to welcome yesterday the signing of a memorandum agreement for the inclusion of 22 municipalities and two cities in Zamboanga del Sur and Zamboanga del Norte to the cash transfer program.

Last Thursday, local chief executives of one city and 60 municipalities signed a similar agreement for inclusion in the program.

### 17 provinces

Sarangani, La Union, Ilocos Sur, Palawan, Masbate, Aklan, Samar, Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao and Sulu were among the 17 provinces that signed agreements last Thursday.

Beneficiaries from these responsible areas will start getting their grants this June, said Social Welfare Secretary Esperanza Cabral in a statement.

The 4Ps program was enacted in late 2007 as a pilot project covering seven provinces and two cities in Ilocos, Bicol, Eastern Visayas and Caraga.

According to the DSWD, to date more than P1.6 billion worth of cash grants have been distributed to 260,000 households from 259 municipalities and 63 provinces.

### P10-B budget

Cabral said the President has approved a P10-billion budget for the program's implementation this year.

The beneficiaries of the rest of the projected 700,000 households in the expansion areas will be completed by the end of May, the DSWD said.

The DSWD has refused to disclose the 4Ps program as a "dole-out."

It said it is a poverty reduction strategy of the government that "invests in human capital," and is patterned after the conditional cash transfer program that the World Bank has employed in Latin America and Africa.

The program's families which are the program's beneficiaries are determined through a survey conducted by the DSWD.

A qualified family can receive cash grants amounting to P6,000 a year, or P500 a month per household for health and nutrition expenses and P3,000 for one school year, or P300 a month for 10 months per child for educational expenses.

A household with three qualified children can receive a subsidy of P1,400 a month, or P15,800 annually as long as it complies with the program's conditions.

### Conditions for grantees

The DSWD has set the following conditions for the cash transfer:

+Pregnant women must get prenatal care starting in the first trimester; child birth must be attended by a skilled health professional and be followed by postnatal care.

+Parents must attend family planning sessions, mother's classes or effective parenting seminars.

+Children, aged zero to five, must be brought to health centers for regular checkups and vaccinations.

+Children, aged 3 to 5, must be sent to daycare or preschool at least 85 percent of the time.

+Children, aged 6 to 14, must be in class at least 85 percent of the time.

### Grant for 5 years

The cash grant may be withdrawn from an ATM (automated teller machine) which the DSWD will entrust to the "most responsible member" of the family.

Families are eligible to receive the grant for a maximum of five years.

The grant can be canceled at any time if the conditions are not followed.

# 2 more wedding guests in Zambales party get swine flu

From page A1

confinement to health facilities.

He said the DOH was getting more reports of suspected cases from hospitals.

The Global Health Organization disease surveillance data on the global influenza cases has increased to 13,314 and that the disease has now been reported in 53 countries around the world.

The global body says there have been 99 deaths linked to swine flu.

Philippine authorities anticipate the number of confirmed cases to increase, as to other countries, due to the relative ease of transmission from respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs or sneezes, and unprotected interaction ensued.

### 'Dengue were fatal'

"There should not be any cause of alarm," Duque stressed.

"The most important thing is that we still do not have any severe case or any death," he said. "There is an indication that there is already sustained community transmission in the Philippines."

Duque said while the AH1N1 was a novel flu virus, "most of the cases are mild and self-limiting." The global case fatality ratio is less than 1 per cent, or less than one death per 1,000 cases.

"Dengue is even more fatal. My tow have 57 deaths [from dengue] as of April this year," he said

### Up and about

One of the confirmed cases announced by the DOH yesterday—the man—had been confined at home and outside of Metro Manila, Duque said. The other's have been advised to stay home under DOH monitoring after they showed mild symptoms, like cough and fever.

The DOH confirmed its first case last May 21, a 18-year-old Filipino survivor Timothy Ho, who traveled with his parents to the United States and Canada. She was discharged from the hospital on May 28.

### Classes on

Despite anticipating more confirmed cases in the coming days, Duque said there was no need to postpone the start of classes on June 1. (Story on Page A2.)

He announced the DOH might shift to renewed strategy from hospitalization of both suspected and confirmed cases, to outpatient and home management of mild cases.

"Hospitals will still segregate each case and will treat patients with such complications, its Fe said, the virus is still limiting on the patient can just stay at home, have bed rest and drink fluids, including 'tsuasua,'" Duque said.

### High-risk groups

High-risk groups—or those with pre-existing illness like asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, hypertension, heart disease, diabetes mellitus and immunodeficiencies—were advised to immediately seek medical treatment if they manifest flu-like symptoms.

The DOH has advised the public to exercise preventive health measures, such as frequent hand washing, covering mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing, social distancing and proper hygienic practices.

Those who manifest flu symptoms, such as fever, sore throat or coughing, after having recently traveled abroad or having come into contact with an AH1N1(1) virus carrier, should see a doctor or call the DOH hotline 711-1001, Duque said.

Those who have flu-like symptoms but have not traveled abroad or have not come into contact with a confirmed case should stay home, take supportive treatment, drink plenty of liquids and get adequate bed rest, he said. If symptoms persist or worsen, they should immediately see a doctor.

### Worries across Asia

Elsewhere, swine flu worries spread in Asia yesterday as the virus appeared in spread from crew to passengers on a cruise ship off Australia, and China reported its first suspected case of local transmission.

The 2,000-passenger ship Superb Star brought to Australia's Gold Coast on Thursday a crew member who had been diagnosed with swine flu in Singapore, where the ship had docked on May 19.

Officials then quarantined the ship's 1,000 crew members and 1,000 passengers, and ordered them to remain in their cabins.

Australian Health Minister Nicola Roxon said 11 passengers and crew had developed flu-like symptoms, and that 10 of them had tested positive for swine flu.

Australia has confirmed 36 cases of swine flu, the most outside North America.

China said it suspects the virus had been transmitted within the country for the first time.

A 29-year-old woman in the southern city of Guangzhou tested positive after developing a fever, the Chinese Health Ministry said on its website.

Before the latest case, there had been 15 confirmed cases of swine flu in mainland China. All caught the flu overseas.

Singapore's health ministry said three more people had contracted swine flu, a day after announcing the country's first case. With reports from Desiree Cabana, Inquirer Northern Luzon; AP, Reuters and AFP

### First local transmission

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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Saturday, May 30, 2009
7th Week of Easter

1st Reading: Acts 20:28-38, 36-38
Gospel: Jn 21:20-25

Peter looked back and saw that the disciple Jesus loved was following us well, the one who had reclined close to Jesus at the supper and had asked him, "Lord, who is to betray you?" On seeing this disciple Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, what about him?" Jesus answered, "If I want him to remain until I come, what business is it of yours? Follow me."

Because of this the rumor spread in the community that this disciple would not die. Yet Jesus had not said to Peter, "He will not die," but "Suppose I want him to remain until I come."

It is this disciple who vouches for these things he has recorded here and we know that his testimony is true. But Jesus did many other things. If all were written down, the world itself would not hold the books recording them.

Commentary:

It was the will of Christ that His disciples should attend to their own spiritual lives and not be curious about future events, whether they related to themselves or to others. Likewise, many things we are apt to be curious about should mean nothing to us. We should work quietly and mind our own business. Curiosity about the duty of following Christ, we shall find neither heart nor time to meddle in those things which do not belong to us.

Only a small part of the actions of Jesus have been written in the Gospels. But, let us bless God for all that is in them, and be thankful that there is so much of it. Jesus thought it needful to deliver our spirits and regulate our practice: any more than would have been unnecessary. Much of what is written is over-looked, much is forgotten, and much is made the matter of doubtful dispute. We are, however, receive just from a thorough knowledge of all that Christ did and said, as well as learning from His example and precepts, now in this privilege until each and every one of us. May this be our never-ending happiness.

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# DepEd wary of sex video in students' cell phones

From page A1

ration (DepEd) has banned the use of cell phones during classes.

Uh, what about during recess?

DepEd has researched a six-year-old memorandum explaining the use of cell phones in public schools.

Uh, when about after school?

In an interview, education assistant secretary Teresita Ubiña said parents and teachers to guide their children and monitor their use of cell phones.

"The proliferation of sex videos through cell phones is one of the reasons we recommended the banning of cell phones inside classrooms," Ubiña said.

She referred to a November 2003 memorandum by former education secretary Edilberto de Jesus, which "entirely leaves it to him on the use of cell phones by students during class hours."

### Curious adolescents

Ubiña is particularly worried for "adolescents" who are very curious about many things.

Education Secretary Jesli Lapus said they would not completely ban cell phones in public schools, but only during classes, because many parents want their children to bring cell phones so they could be reached during emergencies.

Lapus said he main objection to allowing cell phones inside classrooms was because "it is distracting to teachers and others."

He said cell phones could also provide services for cheating during exams.

Ubiña said: "We want our students to be able to focus on their lessons."

### Caught texting

She noted that many of the students brought to the guidance counselor had been caught by their teachers texting during class.

"They appeared to be reading their books, with their heads bowed. But when the teachers checked on them, they were actually texting," Ubiña said.

With the memo's revival, teachers could confiscate cell phones of students caught using them during class, Ubiña said, but they should be returned after class.

She said the department also recognized the benefit of students keeping their phones, especially those who suffer from asthma or other illnesses which require medication and immediate attention.

According to the 2003 memorandum, "Teachers and parents should devise ways to educate students on the responsible use of cell phones to prevent them from engaging in misguided and immoral activities."

It was issued six years ago in response to the proliferation of "text and picture messages" sent through multimedia cell phone messages

# Katrina sues Hayden's mother for libel

By John M. Aurelio and Tarra Quismundo

AFTER ATTENDING AN EMOTIONALLY charged hearing at the Senate the other day, actress Katrina Halili yesterday rallied up her lawyers and appointed best on refurbishing the image she said had been ruined by allegations of drug use.

Already embroiled in a sex video scandal that is now the subject of Senate inquiry, Halili yesterday filed libel charges against the mother of her former lover who alleged in television interviews that the actress was a drug user and had provided her son with fantasy sex sessions.

Earlier in the day, Halili met with officials of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) to deny the charges that surfaced along with sex videos of her and Dr. Hayden Kho Jr. The actress also volunteered to undergo drug tests to interfere agency instead of PDEA, agency Director General Dionisio Santiago said after separately following an hourlong closed-door meeting.

In a complaint filed in the office of Quezon City assistant City Prosecutor Aura Victoria Green-Villamor, Halili, 23, filed two counts of libel against Irene Kho, alleging that the respondent made false and malicious remarks against her in interviews aired over ABS-CBN on May 25 and May 26.

### Personal attack

Halili said the statements "were all calculated to redirect the public into believing that the complainant is a drug user and a pusher" when said malicious statements are false and unfounded." She claimed Kho's statements caused dishonor and discredit to her person and reputation as an actress and a celebrity.

The actress pointed out in the complaint that she was already the victim in the sex video controversy. "And yet, the respondent continued the personal attack against the complainant and resorted to character assassination by alleging matters not connected with the complaint for violation of Republic Act 9262 (Anti-Violence against Women and their Children)," Halili said.

Halili has already filed a complaint against Dr. Kho for violation of RA 9262 in the National Bureau of Investigation on May 20, and an administrative case as well in the Professional Regulations Commission on May 15.

At the PDEA earlier, the actress, together with two lawyers and manager Omar Sortijas, met with agency officials to answer a subpoena sent to her following Irene Kho's allegations that were also backed by her during his testimony in the Senate on Thursday.

"So far, she said there was none (drug use). There was a denial, but we still talk to whoever has any knowledge of it. What happened today was just enrollment building," Santiago said.

### No bearing

"We will try to find out to locate meetings if we can get more information that could help in the investigation. If there is none, then we have to declare that this investigation has no bearing on the issue, and we will just sink in the sex video angle," he added.

The PDEA also recommended the Kho to appear at the agency headquarters in Quezon City pending the investigation until the doctor called to visit on another day after learning that there were media persons around.

Santiago said the PDEA would like to find out where the drugs came from and whether or not other celebrities were also supplied with the banned substances, to support the "public admissions by certain quarters."

The agency had requested Halili to undergo tests to confirm Kho's charges, but Santiago himself said the results would have no bearing on the agency's investigation even if the tests turn out positive. "What we are looking for is the source of the drugs," he said.

Without giving names, Santiago said, "There are certain individuals and sources that are the subject of our investigation. Some of them, if they cooperate, can provide information to strengthen the case."

### Katrina's choice

"We can choose where my client wants to go for drug testing," said Halili's lawyer Raymond Palad. "She can go the NBI, the Crime Laboratory in Camp Crame or any reputable hospital."

Santiago confirmed that Halili asked to be tested elsewhere, but he said he insisted the testing be done at the PDEA as it was the lead investigating agency to ensure the confidentiality of the results, he added.

"If Katrina's camp doesn't agree, they can have it elsewhere. Our only request is that our chemists should also be there during the tests," he said.

Meanwhile, a lawyer of Dr. Kho said they decided to submit their client's counterfeit diploma to the NBI after conducting their investigation on the sex video scandal, adding that the certainty were similar to what the doctor already said in the Senate.

Lawyer Herbert Hernante said he had advised his client to not dwell on his public appearances by his own safety, citing an incident at the Senate on Thursday when Sharon Abang, a former policeman and Laguna town mayor, was quoted as saying that this man lucky he did not have a gun or him, or he would have used it on the doctor instead of posting, hostile stance on him in an ungentlemanly manner.

### Research work

Leo Pineda, a lawyer-friend of businessman Eric Johnston Chua, also appeared at the NBI-Antifraud and Computer Crimes Division (AFCCD). Chua is suspected to have had a hand in the sex videos ending up on the Internet.

Pineda denied he was Chua's lawyer, saying he was just doing "research work." A source at the bureau, however, said Pineda's "research" entailed getting copies of statements already submitted to the NBI.

Abang, meanwhile, was ordered released yesterday afternoon after he was held at the Pasay City police headquarters Thursday night for disturbing proceedings at the Senate.

Saying he was not sorry for what he did, Abang admitted he was angered by how Kho treated the women in the sex videos, "and I was reminded of my daughter."

The former town official said he was set to fight for his convictions.

At the height of the trial in Singapore that led to the conviction of domestic helper Flor Contemplacion in 1995, he launched a hunger strike and burned the Singapore flag.

Abang's exploits as a police officer were also the subject of a movie, "Abang: Bounty Hunter." With reports from Anjeanette I. Andrade and Wilda Cachero-Callejo

KATRINA Halili at the PDEA


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# SEC orders hike in preneed trust funds

By Michael Lim Ubac

THE SECURITIES AND EXchange Commission (SEC) has directed preneed companies to increase contributions to their trust funds to strengthen protection for plan holders.

The new policy was disclosed by the SEC Commissioner Thaddeus Valenzuela during a hearing of the Senate inquiry into the troubled preneed industry being conducted by the Senate trade and commerce committee chaired by Sen. Ejercito Estrada.

"I think the SEC for finally listening our plea. I've been suggesting this for a long time," said Roman, adding that this would ensure that policy holders were amply protected from bankrupt preneed firms.

The new regulations, to take effect next week, mandate preneed firms to set aside 70 percent of an education and pension plan holder's fixed-year payment to their trust funds.

This means that 70 centavos for every P1 being paid by plan holders would go to the trust fund, the amount of excess that preneed firms are required to deposit in trustee banks to cover the payment of maturing plans.

### Only 5 centavos

Under the old scheme, only 5 centavos of every P1—or 5 percent of plan holders' contributions—go to the trust fund.

Roman has asked the government to suspend a request from victimized plan holders to be exempted from paying estate filing fees.

He urged President Macapagal-Arroyo to use her influence with the Justice department and order the waiving of filing fees for preneed plan holders victimized by the fraudulent operations of the shuttered Legacy Group of Cebu city for Angeles.

### Exemption from filing fees

Roman has also written to the Supreme Court seeking the exemption of victims of failed preneed companies and investment scams from the payment of estate filing fees, which he said have become "stumbling blocks" to the quest for justice.

He said the inability of Legaspi's victims to pay the required filing fees with the Department of Justice and the corresponding legal fees with the courts have delayed, if not blocked, the recovery of their claims and the prosecution of the responsible and fly-by-night financial schemes.

The fees include filing fees, estate tax paid to the BIR if complainants want to institute criminal cases, and expenses for locating assets and preneed companies.

### Access to justice

"Such exemption from filing fees will definitely provide real access to justice, particularly for those who do not have the means to hire counsel to represent their claims and pursue the cases," Roman said.

Mark and Anelle Empoe incorporate suggestions and feedback from the campers in their sessions, which they plan on a day-to-day basis.

"Attending the camp was very timely, as the school opened it here, and I've got fresh ideas for teaching our subjects, particularly English," said Lerkanona.

"While I already am games when I teach my subjects, but my taught us new and fresh methods of teaching, which I think will encourage students to be more confident of their English," she said.

# Mindanao teachers stick to English in Cebu camp

From page A1

Sydney] accused, and this helps the campers become more conscious and at the same time confident of their language usages.

"But I am sure here to help them; if they find it difficult to comprehend and express themselves in English."

### Practice, practice

Speaking good English comes as a result of using the language in natural situations on top of formally learning it, according to Stephen Krashen's theory of second language acquisition.

"In the real world, conversations with nonproficient native speakers who see nothing to help the nonproficient understand are very helpful," says Krashen, a linguistics expert at the University of Southern California.

That is how the English Language Camp hopes to help.

It seeks to train teachers to speak good English by giving them opportunities for direct interaction and conversation with native English speakers. It also gives them ideas on how to teach the language more effectively as well as supplementary tools such as the coined English books and the DepED's BOOKALOG Project distributed to the teachers and that they brought back to their classrooms.

INTERACTIVE Sydney Hutt, Peace Corps volunteer, and cohort Jessie Gaspar, a grade school teacher from Aklan, Zamboanga Sibugay, say the camp is all about confidence building. CESAR RAMIREZ

VISUALS TELL THE STORY US Peace Corps volunteer Patricia Rahman teaches the campers how to interpret stories in English using colorful pictures. CESAR RAMIREZ

With former English-speaking teachers and better English-teaching methodologies and tools, it is hoped that the Filipino youth can learn the language better and more easily.

Learning it better is critical in a world where Filipinos have found a niche in global business process outsourcing and overseas jobs, and are discovering the need to hold on to their advantage as among the best English-speaking people in Asia.

### Applicable lessons

"We make sure that the methods and tools we introduce [at the camp] are applicable to the needs of the teachers, which they can later use in their classrooms," Stephen Mora said.

The camp's interactive approach is especially rational in contextualizing lessons for classrooms in Mindanao.

# Comelec close to awarding ₱11.3-B contract for poll automation

From page A1

chine of the remaining bidder—the consortium of the Smartmatic International and Total Informational Management Corp. (Smartmatic-TIM)—pursuant to its capability to run on battery power for 12 straight hours and to scan and store 2,000 ballot images, according to Presidential Reliance chair of the Comelec's Special Bids and Awards Committee (SBAC).

"We're very, very near to finalizing the coming of the machines and the awarding of the contract, it's still for awarded," Reliance told reporters.

He said Smartmatic-TIM's machine had satisfied 24 of the criteria set by the SBAC's technical working group (TWG).

Smartmatic-TIM is a Dutch-owned firm.

Reliance said the TWG reported that the machine had correctly read all the 160 ballots that were fed into it.

The machine also recorded a 100 percent accuracy rate when 625 ballots were fed into it during an earlier test on Wednesday, Reliance said.

### Rival bidder

Reliance brushed off insinuations that the SBAC should have disqualified the Dutch consortium after its PCOS machine couldn't read the ballots during a test run on Thursday.

He said the results only came from the PCOS unit itself.

"The wiring of the human was not part of the system," he said.

Reliance, however, said the SBAC would still have to address the motion for reconsideration filed by the consortium of AMA Group of Companies and Election System and Software before they could decide on the awarding the contract.

Jaime Cruz, AMA chairman, SBAC had yet to issue its ruling on the request of AMA-ES to participate again in the bidding.

"If the financial bid of AMA is lower, then we will open their bid documents and test their machines," Reliance told the Inquirer.

### Text message

With the bidding process almost over, allegations of bribery involving the head of the Comelec procurement committee surfaced in media circles.

An anonymous text message sent to journalists covering the city run of the ballot counting machines announced Reliance received P2 million in bribe money to help the Dutch consortium.

"Enormously machine broke down last night and the Comelec still want to award the deal to the Venezuelan government-owned corporation. Sila it because Reliance got P2 million bribe from Smartmatic? Hmmmpass," the message read.

The anonymity arise Reliance denied that his cool in he relevantly denied the allegations.

"Text is false. Then is malicious. Libray dun categorically," a calmly incensed Reliance told reporters.

"I never received anything. I never asked for anything and I have no intention of receiving or demanding anything."

### Senatorial denial

The Dutch consortium also discussed the allegations.

Cesar Flores, Smartmatic's sales director, also clarified that although the company maintains an office in Venezuela, it is entirely owned by private individuals and that its main holding company is based in The Netherlands.

"We are going through a very strict and stringent proceedings of qualification made by the Comelec. We don't use type of wrongdoing," Flores said.

Reliance challenged his accusers to show evidence about the purported bribery.

"You are cowards and liars. I'm challenging you to come and show your faces," he told making his voice.

### Locsin's challenge

Reliance was the subject of an earlier video footage which supposedly showed him asking a disqualified bidder in signing documents to make a trade secret. Reliance denied he was the one in the video.

Lozin behind the claims of some quarters that the machine was vulnerable to hacking and tampering.

"I challenge any of them, I give them 50 cents to do it, to hack to an ATM [automated teller machine]. None of these idiots is hacker, nobody can hack anything, pinbago sa! Can even hack to their computers," he said.

When asked if holding automated elections next year was possible, he said: "Absolutely so. I told here repeatedly."

"If an automatic hits the early, it's not Lozan. Lozi are keeper an, automatic does not hit the earth," he joined.

UNDER PEAK AT POLL AUTOMATION The staff of winning bidder Smartmatic sets up its system at the Comelec conference room in the Palacio del Gobernador in Intramuros. STORY

AUDIT TRAIL A staffer checks out the strips of paper called audit trails that record all data made by the voter on every ballot sheet including the time it was processed. Smartmatic has to undergo only one more testing today to get the multibillion peso contract. STORY

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OPINION

# Party of lightweights

THERE WAS NOTHING TO GET ANYONE EXCITED about the merger last Thursday of the two administration parties, Lakas-CMD and Kampi. That was a naive formality for the two political groups that have always been at the beck and call of Malacañang. In fact, what the media found newsworthy was not the presence of many administration politicians, but the absence of a few last influential leaders of the two parties.

**EDITORIAL**

President Macapagal-Arroyo presided over the meeting that launched the formation of Lakas-Kampi-CMD. But Kampi entered into the union without its president, Camarines Sur Rep. Luis Villafuerte, one of the President's most vocal defenders in the House of Representatives during the three attempts to impeach her. He was talking after his proposal that local leadership disputes be first resolved was ignored. The Lakas-CMD contingent was without some of its most prominent leaders. Former President Fidel V. Ramos had been invited to address the gathering but he chose not to go. Rep. Jose de Venecia, who had been replaced as both House speaker and party president by Prospero Nograles, was not invited. Quezon City Mayor Feliciano Belmonte was in China.

But the truly remarkable thing about the union of two parties that count among its members 145 out of 285 members of the House of Representatives, 56 out of 81 governors, 85 out of 120 city mayors and 1,112 out of 1,507 town mayors was the absence of one single viable candidate for president in its ranks. Of course, Chairman Bayani Fernando of the Metropolitan Manila Authority has been plastering the countryside with his name and offering himself as the administration's standard-bearer in 2010. But few, if any, among his party mates take him seriously, leaving him to run alone his own party's "lack of fairness" and its propensity to ignore "party loyalties like me and other long-time card bearers." That for all its vaunted power and its vast resources, the new party finds itself being forced to consider two outsiders as its presidential candidates: Vice President Noli de Castro and Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro, both of whom claim no party affiliation at present.

This is both humiliating and alarming for the new administration party but it is hardly surprising. A party that is glued together not by shared visions, values and principles but by an insatiable craving for the largesse the President liberally dispenses can only produce officials with parochial outlooks and self-serving agendas. It cannot produce leaders whom people can look up to with great trust and respect.

On the other hand, a President whose public approval rating is abysmal cannot expect the best and the brightest to flock to her party. As the 2007 senatorial elections showed, the President's unpopularity is contagious; it affects her chosen candidates. Getting the President's blessing could prove fatal to a candidate for national office. It's a risk no presidential contender doing well in the polls seems willing to take—not even those with limited resources, like De Castro.

The leaders of Lakas-Kampi-CMD may think they have created a formidable political machine, a juggernaut that will crush anybody who stands in the way of their party's victory. But barring some mysterious Palace phone calls to somebody like "Garci," they could be in for a surprise.

# The ethical moment in politics

**PUBLIC LIVES**

*Randy David*

THERE IS A VIEW OF POLITICS THAT PHILIPPINE politicians have been professing lately: "Politics is a numbers game," they love to say. And they say it as if that is all there is to politics. Of course the statement is true—in a limited sense. Every house that wants to pass a law must muster the numbers. If you have the numbers, you will not be tarnished of any wrongdoing.

But this view of politics is flawed, not only in a moral sense but also in a sociological sense. It ignores the fact that, where you live in a society, you cannot avoid having to answer ultimately for your actions. Sheer numbers will not shield you from accountability. I call this the ethical moment in politics.

One does not run in an election simply because he is confident that his wealth, political network, or popularity will carry him to office. Rather, he reaches his bid in terms of a moral or professional worthiness coupled with an overflowing need to serve. But even the most cynical politician wants to be perceived merely as a shameless power seeker. He may lay claim, at most, to his way to public office, but he cannot completely ignore the ethical dimension because he wishes his election to be seen not only as legal but, above all, as legitimate. Even the most ruthless dictator nurtures a wish to be loved.

What is true of politicians applies to voters as well. A voter may sell his vote, demand or accept something in return, but he will always try to rationalize this in morally acceptable terms. He will say: "This politician may be dirty but no one is clean anyway, and so it comes down to who can best help the needy." The voter's conscience may not bother him, but, if there is one like him, his neighbors, friends, and relatives will. Unable to account for his action, he invites contempt and derision.

This sense of accountability (answerability or responsibility for one's actions outside oneself) is the reason why the commissioner who's in migration has not "ground zero ten reasons," to borrow a phrase from Karl Marx. Nor when the organs of the State and the market have completely replaced the natural habits of the community, not even the new norms of evaluating can remove the ethic of accountability that human beings felt toward one another in older societies.

We are at that precise point in the transition—where the old is dying and the new still struggling to be born, is already morphed beyond recognition. Take a look at the condition of our institutions, at the way the rule of law has been humanized, and at the way politics itself has been used to pursue every pore of our national being. Take a look at the situation of our families and communities today, after more than three decades of being fed into the belly of overseas employment in order to satisfy a crude utilitarian thirst. Debate me in politics if we cannot call our leaders to account for the ruin at which they have allowed the social tissue to deteriorate in the pursuit of blind material accumulation!

It is my belief that, as it stands today, nationalism—politics—especially its regular electoral expression—has become nothing more than a way of further accumulating our people into a diseased social mosaic. It offers no paths to organic development, it dishonors all instincts for balanced growth. It offers entertainment and diversion, instead of debate and the contest of visions. It forecloses options, rather than opens new spaces for invention.

The British writer Simon Critchley thinks of politics as "the creation of such a space around a demand and then articulating it in relation to the state." The demand, whatever it may be, assumes an unstoppable force to the extent that it can be woven into an ethical narrative. There has to be "a moment of universalization in the articulation of any policy," says Critchley. From the perspective of the political subject, I believe that, being the simple concept of politics, he has points to remaining politics inhere, I think, real politics may still be found in our society today.

I saw from the other night in Dita Carabian's "Lupang Binusong," a powerful documentary film of the recent struggles for land by the peasants from Bukidnon and Negros Occidental. The Surabay farmers undertook a 1,700-kilometer journey on foot from their remote village in Mindanao to Manila, where they hoped to bring their demand before the nation's president. The grueling 39-day ordeal took them through heat and rain took on the meaning of the biblical desert's crossing of God's chosen people, and made the whole journey sacred. Rightly, the transport marchers stated the same in their official terms: "Pipo do not have, only human beings can fill the void" (in reference to the planned conversion of their land into a corporate piggery farm). They won.

In Negros, the eager cane farmers of Isabela de Bebe Alalaga, finding that the land owner would kill them before he would allow them to take over the land that had been granted them under the agrarian reform law, decided to camp out in front of the main office of the Department of Agrarian Reform. Demanding that the government install them in their lands, they went on a hunger strike that lasted 29 days. In the cramped space they shared for themselves beneath make-shift tents, they created a sheltering Church of the poor in which they nourished their fading hopes. They too, won in the end.

Oscar Wilde was right. "Every thing to be true must become a religion."

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Comments to public.lives@gmail.com

# Diversity in the Court

PRESIDENT OBAMA, EMPHASIZED IN HIS PRESIDENTIAL campaign, a wish to appoint to the bench "somebody who's got ... the empathy to understand what it's like to be poor, or African-American, or gay or disabled or old."

In the choice of Judge Sonia Sotomayor to replace the retiring Justice David Souter, Mr. Obama has given us early indication of the wish to make American government reflect better the nation's cosmopolitan make up. ...

**FOREIGN COMMENT**

An opportunity to tilt the balance of opinion in the court will come later. And Mr. Obama would be wise to continue in his role as a coalition builder rather than to promote a philosophy of judicial activism. ...

It is proper that the Supreme Court should reflect both a diversity of national origins and important social changes. But liberal stances are best advanced by winning political successes rather than through judicial fiat. This makes Judge Sotomayor an appropriate choice.

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# GDP, Villar, sex video, etc.: too many things going on

**GET REAL**

*Solita Collas-Monsod*

MOST OFTEN, THIS COLUMN DEALS WITH one topic at a time, but this one is an exception...too many things going on. The reader is asked for dispensation as one gives them a once a call's fish and a position in dog deeper in the throat.

First and foremost, the first quarter GDP growth estimates are, at 0.4 percent, lower than expected. Independent forecaster (World Bank, Deutsche Bank, credit rating agencies) used to cluster around the 1.5-percent level; above that, the 1.1 percent in January, which is a far cry from 0.4 percent.

To be sure, these are annual growth forecasts, so one question is whether this is a portent of worse times ahead. Jesus Estanislao of the NSCB found that the quarterly data from 1982...and the good news is that in 19 out of those 27 years, or more than 70 percent of the time, the annual growth rates have either coincided (38) or equaled (4) the first quarter growth figures. The bad news is that in three out of the four recession years the country has experienced during that period ('84, '85, '91, '98), the first quarter growth rates were higher than the year's rates.

So take your pick. But if the so-called "Leading Economic Indicators" (LEI) for Q1 '09 are any indication, the immediate future doesn't look too good. For the first time in 19 quarters, the composite LEI has turned negative, and while that doesn't necessarily mean negative growth, it isn't a source of comfort either.

The next question is why the country grew slower than expected during the first three months of the year. The load is to be figured on the slowly part of the equation, as we should look further. Remittances from overseas Filipinos increased...by 10.9 percent in dollar terms, and 16.5 percent in peso terms, thanks in part to a fairly 99.7 percent rate in deployments, for which credit has to be given to Secretary Hilarion Ermita and his massive efforts in the regard...contrary to many gloom-and-doom predictions, as the answer is not there either.

Neither personal loads so as a culprit: per capita personal consumption expenditures declined, i.e., people were not spending (notwithstanding increased remittance from OFWs). Everyone is trying to save for the rainy days ahead, presumably, infrastructure of economics is sure being counterintuitive. In other words, one cannot blame the individual households for their behavior.

What one can put the blame on, however, is the government's so-called fiscal stimulus package designed precisely to counteract these demand decreases, which obviously hasn't kicked in. The data show, for example, that government's public construction decreased by 4.4 percent from the same period last year. And responsibility for this state of affairs has to be shared by the legislature, which didn't pass the budget until well into the second half of January (which is pretty late for them, but still not good enough), considering the urgency and the executive, which didn't approve it until almost two months later. Hence, but not quite, like Steve Stibbling while theme burned.

That's the can't-lick on the economy front we go to the politics.

Chel Diokno's help her comment on the investigation of Sen. Manny Villar and other members of the opposition who, from where I sit, have treated their institution shamefully (and contributed to its already deteriorating image). Its motive he is being singled out and persecuted. Like anyone, however he is a powerful politician. Notorious. Wasn't he elected Senate president by the same people, or at least by a majority of the chamber? It looks more like he is hiding behind, or maybe even siphoning this "persecution" theme, for political purposes. What's wrong with answering the charges formally? An either need his position for personal (business) agenda or not. If he can show that the case which alleges him to be buying his line—that he did not, why can't he show his power to a more formal setting? Once he really think that Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile, who has been on both the receiving and giving ends of real politics of persecution, or for that matter the Filipino people, will allow this to happen? Come on.

But Villar is not the only senator who, in his attempt at getting personal political mileage, is dragging the Senate as an institution through the mud. Also here more, Jamby Madrigal, didn't contact will two well either...sensible or unwilling to keep the Hayden Kho-Katrina Halili hearing from becoming a political circus with some senators, as the performing hyenas, also playing to the gallery. That hearing is still of legislation? My sainted foot. The questions I heard from those senators were certainly not in aid of legislation, as much as they were in aid of getting their 15 minutes in the TV/Klieg light.

It certainly seemed that at least in the Halili case, the video was taken with her knowledge and consent—and there is certainly nothing wrong with that between two consenting adults in the privacy of their bedroom. It also seemed that Kho did not release those tapes or show them to anyone. But no one was trying to pinpoint how the tapes were stolen—a hacker? Friends? Relatives? Employees. Halili's career doesn't seem to have been damaged at all, contrary to what she tearfully claimed. I read that in Brock's main model.

A final lick, and say that I promise I will get in the bottom of. And that is Solicitor General Agnes Devanadera's request for permission to take advantage of the Lim Tay Matters Investigation family feud to help the government's case against Jun Cuneta. But evasiveness.

# The great popularity of chess

SOCIAL CLIMATE

Mahar Mangahas

THE ONCE IS INSPIRED BY FLORENCIO R. Campomanes, former president of the World Chess Federation, whose final the phrase chosen by for the first time is five days ago in Baguio. He met through natural friend Edith Arnaz, president of the University of the Cordilleras, who had invited Campomanes to speak to the public by virtue of his new assignment with the national sports office.

Despite his age, the stamina is still excellent. I was a recent bad car accident, and his email is as sharp as ever. Campo (as he likes being addressed) called me up. If there is any issue on how to move Filipino play chess, and at what age do they begin. He believes that national contribution to chess comes from mass participation in it, if possible starting at the age of five.

Campomanes' opinions are sponsored, partially, from the national Survey of Leisure Time and Sports (LTS), done on March 30 to April 2, 2009 by the International Social Survey Programs, of which Social Weather Stations is a member. Such surveys only include people 18 years old and above. The LTS survey has separate items on sports which are also physical activities (of which the most popular among Filipinos is, naturally, the "games" named. It asks: "Thinking about games rather than sports or physical activities, what games do you play that you most frequently?"

Chart 4 of the The 4 games it names are that there is Filipinos' favorite games, the most among non-physical sport. Their rating is as the game they play most frequently are 21.6 percent in the country. This propose to it 3 million adult chess players in the country, based on a population of 54.1 million Filipino adults (18 years old and above).

Chess is relatively more popular in Metro Manila, where it is cited by 28 percent, than in the rest of Luzon (15 percent), in Visayas, and in Mindanao (less than 5 percent). (Correct?)

Chess is also relatively more popular (28 percent) than a women's game (8 percent).

Chess gets less popular as people get older...with percentages of 21 in the 18-24 age group, 20 in the 25-34 group, 17 in the 35-44 group, 13 in the 45-54 group, and 5 among those of 55 and up.

The population of chess players with education and not to economic class. In the lowest the game of only 1 percent of those who didn't finish elementary school, 16 percent of those with some high school, 26 percent of those with some college, and 28 percent of college graduates. Only 11 percent of class E adults — compared to 28 percent of class ABC adults, each down from levels to game.

I certainly agree with Campo that children should play chess. I learned it at age seven (and not in a game group) and used the skill in many of my relatives and friends of the same age could take part there. But another survey is needed to get numbers on chess playing among children of age 5 to 17.

Incidentally, another item of the LTS survey finds that 38 percent of Filipinos (adults) can play cards (such as 5 percent dominoes, that "Taking part in sports develops children's characters."

**Other popular games** The second most popular is card games (of all types). This was cited by 15 percent, only 6 percentage points behind chess.

Third are video games, a category including computer games, playstation, portable etc., which was cited by 8.1 percent (4.7 million players).

Third for tennis, at 4.8 percent (2.6 million players); then gambling games (cara y cruz, gaming, casino games, etc.) and board games (scrabble, monopoly, etc.) At 1.8%, with 2.2 percent (1.2 million players), a word number games (crosswords, sudoku). Swimch is about same: 1.4 percent or 0.8 million. Sipha is volleyball (1.2 percent or 0.7 million). Fifty-five percent said they do not play any game.

**Sports and national pride.** To the LTS questions on favorite sports or games (multiple-response), "74 percent said they played [category] frequently, and 13.9 percent said [category] played [sometimes/occasionally]. Only 7 percent were either not very positive or not positive at all.

The ranking of sports in order from most-to-least-frequently-played is: (1) 60 percent among elementary dropouts to 78 percent among college graduates.

On the statement "The Philippine government should spend more money on sports," it turns out that opinions are divided — and 41 percent agreeing and 36 percent disagreeing. It seems to me that the Philippines has achieved as much or less in international sports—billiards, bowling, boxing and dance—even without much help from the government.

Support agrarian reform. The other evening, I attended a screening of Dino Gumbao's "Lupang Hinirang," a very moving documentary about the struggle of the Hacienda Dimapilis, which involved 1,300 landowners from Bukidnon to Mindanao, and of Task Force Mapalad (of Negros), who went on a 29-day hunger strike in front of the Department of Agrarian Reform.

Rey Ventura is the (de facto) minister of Climbuilder, the farmers cooperatives and the hunger strike-creative collectivism for having just faith in the power of justice through peaceful means. The farmers shed dead for justice—and for land—in the Philippines, and they finally got land without genuine agrarian reform...even if delayed by a hundred years, or, in Mexico. The brain of the farmers' suffering, is carefully recorded by Gino, with some scenes of dangerous police legislation by government soldiers.

To host a "Lupang Hinirang" screening, write lupanghinirang.sm@gmail.com.

To lobby Congress on agrarian reform, look up http://www.ari4.ph/cropcampaign/. More information is at http://www.philippinerights.net and http://lupangpangako.org.

(Contact SWS: www.sws.org.ph or mahar.mangahas@sws.org.ph.)

# Run for education and school reform

COMMENTARY

Butch Hernandez

THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS ARE JUST a year away, and the Philippines is being asked to choose again. Whether in the "churche" or the "cipalche," only true and political experts will tell.

The presidential aspirants will run for the support through a variety of ways and with strong undercurrents from day zones. The best among them is really how something to offer the Filipino people. Some just think they have something to offer because they are rich or have entirely delusional, but quite convincing nevertheless.

Every day, from here on, is important for every volunteer reform advocate, because there will be more opportunities for us to set the stage for continued and widespread support at public and school levels.

Let's start with the National Youth Commission nominees-holders—and that's practically everybody—one must building our Education System as second.

One latest collaborative effort in this regard is to reform a meaningful tie up between the luminary business and the 1973 Movement. The Bonifacio Movement in 2008 to remember Nora Aquino's unfinished and heroism to today's youth. Brief executive director Rafael C. Lopa said that the luminary Bonifacio are a group of professional business leaders who have volunteered their time for running events to help raise funds for the cause of quality education.

Matrimonial foundation's Chito Gallegoda, one of the conveners of the 1973 Movement, explained that the 1973 Movement aims to help children and to schools, endeavor reading proficiencies and improve their Math, Science and English competencies.

The event was formalized through a Memorandum of Understanding signed by Mr Eugenio Domingo Jr., Mr Mayor Jesse Robredo, Mr Ramon Bacardo, Mr. John Revilla and Mr. Ramon Bengo for the 1973 Movement and Mr. Jun Allen E. Bautista, Michael C. Lopa, Francis Macalalad, Dante Arellano, Reina Gonzales and Rafe Lopa for the Luminary Bonifacio.

Both Hernandez (butchhernandez@gmail.com) is the executive director of the Foundation for Worldwide People Power.

# Being Filipino

YOUNG BLOOD

Evan S. Chew

WHEN I WAS YOUNG, I NEVER TRULY CONSIDERED MYself Filipino. Sure, I lived in the Philippines until I started a grade school, but I never identified with the notion of my birth. My parents' friends always complimented me for the mistake looks when I was still a kid. I didn't have the inside-track knowledge or confidence my Filipino teachers used to talk about. I went to a Chinese school and even a Chinese church, and Chinese dominated my conversations.

### YOUNG BLOOD

*Evan S. Chew*

How could I call myself a Filipino when I spoke Fukien at home? How could I tell my friends I liked a Filipino girl when everyone around me called her a Chinese girl in the school name (in the

"We want to know what the young people are thinking about and what are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the young people writing and below.—Ed.

name, that is, the Filipino name)? Because of social structure I didn't choose. I didn't identify with the characteristics of myself a Filipino; nor was I given a reason to do so.

Surprisingly, all that changed in school. I never thought school would address this issue. I thought school was for learning fancy words for communication. To me, knowledge never meant self-reflection. But I was mistaken. In the end, schools, both of home and abroad, solved the issue of my identity.

It started in the darkest hour of my Chinese high school experience in the Philippines. I was lucky enough to meet my best friend in the classroom. He was a young graduate of dreams who planned to spend his whole life teaching. It was his calling and passion. He was also a devout Christian with strong ethic and experience. He provided social consciousness on the moral outcome involving my student officials. He showed, why "Ask Me Tongues" needed to be taught in school. Every one is entrenched the characters in this novel, including my own for religious belief, Mexican Rafa. He also believed in humanism reach change lives, and he proved that with me.

I took the lingering problems of our country like corruption and poverty, with a grain of salt. There didn't have effect in my world. So, I gave up ignoring them and other social illnesses. After all, politics simply isn't a concern for the Chinese in the Philippines. We aren't involved. We stay out to business. You can be success and call as gold diggers but then, at any successful teacher explained, Adam Smith's invisible hand will solve all our problems.

Sadly, Smith's hypothesis has failed time and time again in the Philippines. My investments have dropped with it, and so did the value of my entrepreneurial Filipino friends and relatives-in-law (Chinese-in-Spirit). Put to one character to "High School Musical" part 3, "We're all in this together." But promoting business, medicine, law and other professions without succumbing to corrupt practices will never solve our problems.

But the issue of identity plagues the Chinese and Filipino communities alike. Our failure to do something about these causes problems to many. By not standing up for equality or justice, we allow the problem to persist. By continuing with life as usual, we allow the problems to grow. By not telling everyone else about them, we conceive that the problems will vanish. And now our problems have grown too big for any "solution" candidates in 2010 (if there is one) to conduct or solve.

Considering all this, my 20-year old brain had a "Eureka!" moment like the other. In this is what it means to be Filipino, I told myself. Filipinos do not only love everything that is good to feel about the country. More importantly, Filipinos fight to change the things that are bad. Filipinos strive to cure the problems that causes bad and look for ways to change them.

It was at that point in my life that I decided that I wanted to be a Filipino. And that was back in high school, when my idealism was at its peak.

Then I had to grow college. I got accepted to my top two choices in Philippine universities. So, in 2008, however, I received an e-mail informing me of my acceptance into the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania.

I had always wanted to study abroad, but this time I couldn't reconcile it with my being Filipino. In the end, I decided to put my country before myself and I could have what I hoped to be the experience of a lifetime.

I arrived in Philadelphia without any preconceptions. I would explore other options once more since no one knew who I was. Maybe I was just consumed in high schoolness accepting this definition of a Filipino, I thought.

One night, I was invited to a dinner hosted for a group of people to associate with. Since I grew up in a Chinese family, it was only natural that I would feel eye to eye along with Chinese students from the mainland. It didn't work. They spoke Daniel Mandarin with each other, and I felt like I would go among them. I guess I'm not really just Chinese after all.

I tried befriending Chinese American students. In the process, I met countless friends who shared my interest in music and the desire to protect our Manchus. However, they didn't know what Gawad Kalinga is nor did they find love story, singing and adobo delicious.

To my relief, I met a strong Filipino-American group and I joined them. They definitely like the food of their parents, but they don't know where they have do their ancestors themselves with the latest gimmicks of our President.

Each of these groups appeals to me but I have never felt like we share the same values. There is always something missing. Being Filipino is more than a short conversation. But what is it, problems. Being a Filipino is not understanding the moral of the problems. Being a Filipino is not just about our food and culture, they only talk about Barack Obama and the US economy. They don't know anything about the eternal Philippine economic and social depression. When I tell them about our ever-buoying money problems, they just laugh or say it is "cool." They can't be trained to empathize, but I am guilty.

After being away for almost a year, I realize that I miss Filipinos. Given the opportunity to start what could be a very profitable career in investment banking in a post-recession United States, of course, I will run it down. I can't imagine living in happy and contented life outside the Philippines. For me, dealing with computers with going back into the and working to help solve our problems.

With this, I have added another dimension to being Filipino: going back to our only home. Sadly, countless Filipinos continue to leave our country for good. I suppose we can't solve Filipino-enough-ness across problems alone.

Evan S. Chew, 18, is an economics freshman at The Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania.

**NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:**

*Send your contributions by e-mail to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address, age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or, if employed, the company you're working and the company you work with. Also, it is better to thoughtout should not have been previously published.*

# Connecting two worlds

BUSINESS MATTERS

Felipe B. Alfonso

OVER 20 YEARS AGO, JUDGE FEDERAL WORE "The Social Responsibility of Business is to Increase Its Profits," which argued that the only business corporation had "no responsibility other than to maximize profits for the shareholders." Today, many academics and business leaders and the public at large disagree with Friedman doctrine. With their considerable land, business corporations in the Philippines and around the world now realize that they cannot exist in a vacuum. They need to be accountable to the communities where they operate and use the natural resources that they have at their disposal. They need to measure only the economic consequences of their behavior but also its social consequences.

What is the reality that could make business people do the right thing? Consider the state of the country's in a whole. A significant percentage of our population live income below the poverty line. Accordingly, economic, social and human development indicators are dismal, resulting in disparities in income and access to education, health and other social services.

Environment is another pressing problem. Take all of resources to the depletion of our forests that have resulted in massive flooding that claim the lives of thousands of lives and many thousands more rendered homeless. The ravaging of the environment the single most possible reason why we have been the beneficiary of no doubt. Pinatubo in 1991 and Ondoy in 2009. Philippine Forest Corp. is one of the world, not containing natural resources at a rate that is 25 percent more than renewed rate.

How should business corporations, and business, address these social problems? Is it up to the government for them to limit themselves to the pursuit profits for their shareholders? Or should they expand their horizon to expand to their other stakeholders? That need to realize that the long-term success of their business is tied to the well-being of their communities. In the same manner that it has used its talents and resources for creating wealth for its shareholders, business can leverage the same for the benefit of the poor for solving the social ills that afflict our nation.

All this has led to a long set of expectations on the part of the public with respect to the role of business in society. In the more advanced economies, surveys have shown that customers prefer to buy goods produced by socially responsible corporations, other things being equal. There has been a surge in socially responsible investments in recent years. The result shows that a significant majority across all socio-economic classes of our population considered it important that companies do not only maximize profits but also that they act in the best interest of society. Such expectations was highest in the classes of the population.

How has business been responded to this challenge? What has it done to bridge the inequalities and inequities in our society? The bridge that business has used is a set of activities and programs that are now more commonly known as CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) programs and projects.

The nature of this bridge has evolved and developed to both business and society learned to work together to address specific issues and problems. At the start, it involved isolated community outreach and participation from businesses—one that is closely linked to philanthropy. This has evolved into much greater cooperation and involvement in need and conduct from between business and its partners developed. Greater commitment developed, together with greater sophistication in the application of social good practices between enterprise. Below is a chart describing these responses and some examples:

| Corporate Response | Examples |
|---|---|
| Philanthropy | Corporate giving and philanthropy (short-term issues) |
| Community relations | Direct involvement in community-based initiatives (short-term steps in partnership with NGOs) |
| Business industry practices | CSR through codes of conduct and value chain management |
| Opportunity thinker initiatives to public wealth problems | CSR integrated with the business strategy (the combination) |

While business continues to use these different forms of CSR activities, market solutions are increasingly needed to address social responsibility issues. It is important that as business applies to social problems the same innovation, creativity and commitment it has shown and used to ensure the success of its business enterprise. It is also important to develop a business life for all Filipinos. But it will be a continuing challenge, a work in progress.

I was struck by the words of a business leader who has found this challenge and opportunity to be inspiring. Speaking at the launch of the Ayala Foundation's Leadership Initiative, organized by the Enterprise Foundation for Management Development, he said:

"My job (as a business leader) is to create wealth. It is practically impossible to find the true (social) agenda and business imperatives). There is an intellectual and cultural gap between what I am supposed to as the world and in the company. I want to make the connection and I want you to do as a business being and what I do is business. Because, perhaps this is asking the fish to walk outside, but I want to make the two worlds one."

CSR is the bridge that links the two worlds.

*Felipe B. Alfonso, MBA, New York, 1967) is the vice chairman of the Ayala Land Inc. (Philippines) and ABS Board of Directors and the executive director of the Ayala Foundation. He is also vice chairman of the Lopez Group Foundation Inc.*

# Noodles: a lesson on eating

LETTERS

WHILE HAVE MYSELF DECLARED, FREE angered by the the Department of Education's controversial purchase of ethnically contained (by about 400 percent) instant noodles for its feeding program, other Filipinos recognize in the fact that the DepEd considers instant noodles a healthful, nutritional alternative supplement be dubious.

Never mind that 15 million packs of instant noodles were found to contain no egg or malunggay ingredients—files belonging the shares of Interpac Manufacturing, Corp., the supplier of the instant noodles. And how the DepEd officials had not known that instant noodles have a high carbohydrate based oil content of sodium and fat, not to mention MSG (believed to be correlated with obesity, asthma and other health problems) escapes me. In other words, instant noodles are simply foods (or "fatsos") for the underclass (ellas).

What makes this issue more painful for me is that I have observed in Japan that children are required to eat lunch meals provided in school. The meals are carefully thought out and prepared by well-trained cooks and dietitians, thus ensuring that there are no "food traffic fouls of the form food groups.

One of the Filipino mothers I interviewed cried about how she had had Japanese child in eating in school. A typical meal consists of a fresh salad, miso (soy product high in protein) soup with seaweeds (high in iron), fish or meat with vegetables and rice, and fruit. The lunch itself serves as a great lesson for the children about the importance of eating right.

If we have P2264 million to spend on instant noodles, could we not use the money for more nutritious alternatives?

—MICHAEL ST. clear@wfsl.ymail.com

## Some suggestions to make things in RP better

WHY NOT INCREASE THE INTEREST rate on savings deposits so that people will be encouraged to save in banks?

Why not increase the pension of GSIS and SSS pensioners so they could at least cope with the ever-increasing costs of living? Remember, the poverty line is pegged at P15,000 a month.

Why not declare a 10-year moratorium on too many holidays in order to move our country more economically speaking?

Why not encourage the planting of bamboo nationwide in order to prevent soil erosion and landslides and beautify the landscape, and in the process save badly needed foreign exchange from the importation of canned bamboo shoots (always) and world-class bamboo furniture?

Why not schedule "staggered" office hours in order to alleviate the chaotic traffic situation in Metro Manila?

Why not connect nearby provinces like Manila to Batangas, Mindoro, Cebu to Bohol, Leyte and Surigao del Norte with bridges a la San Juanico bridge in order to hasten the economic progress of our country?

Why not establish a hospital for SSS members, considering that the number of SSS members has ballooned to 24 million (24 million members, that is a lot!)?

Why not trade "free-tuition" passes to high school students all over the country so that they would be of help to some people during emergency situations?

Why not legalize the importation of TV commercials, which just WHERE televisions and make them angry at advertisers?

Why not establish plenty of cinderella cities all over the country that will help decongest very crowded Metro Manila (it is no accident that the biggest people)?

Why not provide free masks to the increasing 50 percent of municipalities that still have no masks to protect them from the smog?

Why not require high school students to plant one tree each as a requisite for their graduation?

—PAUL B. SHUTTLE, MELLO Court, Salcedo, Makati City

## For some congressmen, Pacquiao fight comes before public service

IT'S PRETTY CLEAR THAT SOME CONgressmen would rather be in Las Vegas for a Manny Pacquiao fight instead of going about their duties as lawmakers. While being a boxing match in Las Vegas is more important to these same congressmen preceding Sabbath that may have an impact on the lives of poor Filipinos, shouldn't we have found all control of them and fire, not to mention MIG (believed to be correlated with obesity, asthma and other health problems) escapement. In other words, instant noodles are simply foods (or "fatsos") for the underclass (ellas).

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## Industry 'going bananas' over aerial spraying issue

THIS IS REACTION TO CONRADO BAÑAS Blas '54 column, which wanted the Department of Health's findings regarding the effects of pesticides in banana plantations. Former GO Sen. Ito 2008 report recommended the banning of aerial spraying of these pesticides.

Based on the study it said "chlorothalonil levels higher" levels of fungicide in Cotabato. But nowhere in the report could the words "statistically significant" be found. In fact, the report says the opposite: in one of the soil samples in Cotabato, the levels of chlorothalonil measured, a potential carcinogenic fungicide hypothesized to exceed the levels allowed by the US Environmental Protection Agency. The DOH report also found that among the residents of the selected persons living outside the plantations, the levels of this potential carcinogenic chemical in their blood were dangerously high. But Bañas didn't mention these findings.

The quote and arguments Bañas used in his column were very misleading. Quote and arguments that several of her columnists had used, verbatim, in their own columns. We can't help but think, therefore, that UPA practitioners have been hired to misinform opinion makers who, therefore, end up misinforming the public about aerial spraying.

Bañas also said that this study's sample was too small, and that we could not make conclusions based on 34 patients. It appears that Bañas' doctorate clearly understood the methods of statistical confirmation, which professional researchers use to prove or disprove a point.

Cotabato's aerial spraying are not new. In fact, in response to public clamor, and despite the proper intervention of concerned national government agencies, Bañas-ex provincial banned aerial spraying way back in 2004. North Cotabato also banned the practice in 2006, and in 2007 Davao del Norte followed suit. Despite the ban, banana plantations in Bañas-ex and North Cotabato continue to thrive, thus belying the claim that banning aerial spraying will kill the banana industry.

The Filipino Banana Growers and Exporters Association (PBGEA), the source of the misleading information about the DOH study, is "going bananas" on the issue of aerial spraying. It continues to defy public and government clamor to abandon aerial spraying and to adopt farmed safer and less dangerous alternatives. It is high time consumers like Bañas allow themselves be used by corporations that focus only on their endless quest for profit.

If PBGEA continues its irresponsible corporate practices, then it would not be a surprise, if, indeed, Cavendish banana production would become a "vanishing industry" and DNGEA would have no one to blame for this but itself, because its market, in its home would demand for a more "morally-grown" product.

—SERGIO ORTEGA JR., head, Bat-Ismail Task Force Against Aerial Spray, ecosystemsdept@yahoo.com

## It's the Filipinos turning country into whorehouse

I AM NOT AGAINST POLITICIANS. I HAVE been a "mister" Filipina citizen here for (one) (one word).

I married a US soldier back in 1990 and lived for four years in the United States. Since 2003, after my husband's retirement from the Army, we have been living in Manila.

My husband has always been following news reports involving American soldiers here in the Philippines. He are disappointed, or rather upset, over reports that a number in of the view that "our country" was turned into a whorehouse for US soldiers." (BAÑAS, 4/2/09)

I beg to disagree with the senator. Not because my husband is a former American soldier but because I am a Filipina. And I say this because I think I have as much right as the senator to express my opinion.

We do know that prostitution is rampant in our country and, with or without the presence of American soldiers, with or without the Balikatan exercises, it will be in the Philippines and will continue to be in the Philippines. Or who's defending prostitution? Aren't are the ones making our country a whorehouse? This is the sad reality that we have to deal with.

My husband also wants to tell the Filipino public that many American soldiers in Philippine civil is honorable and polite in rules and regulations. I am also 100 percent sure that the American soldiers in the Balikatan exercises will not do a Daniel Smith.

—GABRIELLA SOMER, carmel_jamie@yahoo.com

Across the NATION

# GMA wants 'blackout' on kidnappings

ZAMBOANGA CITY—PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-Arroyo yesterday asked media to refrain from reporting on kidnapping cases unless these were over.

"The media responsibility is... not to sensationalize," said Ms Arroyo in an interview aired on Radio Mindanao Network (RMN).

"For instance in many other countries, there are statements that have to be kept, like if there's a kidnapping, for as long as the kidnapping is a live case, it should not be reported as such the minute happens," she said.

Ms Arroyo was responding to a question during the interview from a station manager of RMN.

The President made the statement just as the military and the Philippine Coast Guard launched separate operations against the Abu Sayyaf group, wanted for the release of a Chinese tourist that it kidnapped Tuesday night.

Police also said they have already identified the owners of the white Mitsubishi Lancer that was used as a getaway vehicle during the kidnapping of Alice Wu Wu.

Wu, 24, a mainland Chinese, was vacationing with her husband in Robinsons Jones, where they were in line to enter a restaurant, when the abduction took place.

The victim was believed brought to the Lipasan Marsh, where Pentagon leader Alonto Tilid lives.

Col. Dominga Gobway, commander of the Army's 7th Infantry Battalion, the unit involved in the pursuit operation, told the Inquirer that the Pentagon yesterday opened its line of communication to re-negotiate Lucrecia Tan of Robinsons.

Gobway said there has been no ransom demand.

Chief Supt. Jose Calimoyan, deputy director for operations of the North Catabato police office, said the Lancer's owner-ship was traced to Dato Rukin Umong Usman, chief of Barangay Bayan 2 in Cotabato City.

But he said Usman, who surrendered, denied owning a ship of the vehicle, which is now in police custody.

Usman professed surprise, claiming he never owned a car before, according to Calimoyan.

We want the second Pentagon cleric or General Abubakar and Magindanao, Calimoyan said.

Earlier, the gang also abducted Christopher Ray, a Chinese-Filipino trader, from Sultan Kudarat, Maguindanao.

The Pentagon, blamed for at least 50 kidnapping cases in Mindanao, was founded by former Moro National Liberation Front commander Abdul Marabomkhan in Lanao del Sur in the 1980s.

Among its most prominent victims was Enrique Ilelan, a son of former vice president Emmanuel Pelaez.

But it became notorious for a series of kidnappings of Italian priests and other foreign Christian missionaries.

Its last known missionary victim was Guiseppe Pierantoni, who was abducted while celebrating Mass in Datucalang, Zamboanga del Sur in October 2001. Aida Alquila, Carlo Aquino and Jeoffrey Montero, Inquirer Mindanao

## For Aetas, struggle for land half-won

By Rosette Ovejas
Inquirer Central Luzon

FLORIDABLANCA, Pampanga—Calling tribal land titles at the Registry of Deeds is a struggle half-won.

That is the half of the struggle—preserving and defending the indigenous lands from encroachment or losing ownership of these to the forces—is the most difficult, elders of Aeta, Abelling and Dumagat tribes said on Wednesday.

The four Certificates of Ancestral Domain Title (CADTs) given out by President Macapagal-Arroyo on Wednesday are the first to be registered among 29 CADTs in the country.

Rolando Rivera, commissioner for Luzon of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples, called the occasion a "historic day."

Rosilarie Florentino, chieftain of the Aetas in Hermosa, Bataan, said CADT R03-1408-0703-000 is "a shield against land grabbers."

That CADT covers 4,200.33 hectares of lands and 33.7 ha of waters.

But these—the result of ancestral research, finding landmarks, delegates, consultations and follow-up with bar agencies—can be lost if future new generations weren't aware of the tribe's ownership of lands that their ancestors restored, Florentino said.

Aside from reforesting the area, the tribal council is backing down to work by involving families in preparing plans to develop and protect their ancestral lands, he said.

Dexter Santos, 34, was in tears when he held CADT R03-0703-1208-057. It covers 3,196.82 ha in Barangays Mabiakbid and Mawakal in Floridablanca, Pampanga, and portions of San Marcelino and Subic townsin Zambales.

Santos, a descendant of his nephew, Pablo Santos, to gather the youth and teach them how to guard the lands with their IPs.

"I fear that if they won't be prepared for their responsibilities, the lands would be neglected and abused," Santos said.

Pablo Santos, former commissioner of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples, said he has assessed the task like it was his own life's.

Spending 15 years in the conservatory movements and supporting the Aetas in their struggle for CADT application, Pablo Santos said there was no other option for Aetas now but to develop the area to strengthen their hold on the land.

Senior Aetas questioned the decrease in the size of the domain from 10,000 ha in the 1930s to 5,000 has at present.

Pablo Santos said the Aetas still have the right to question, if need be, the legitimacy of pieces of private property in the domain.

Dumagat chieftain Epifanio de la Torre said the awarding of CADT R03-0511-1205-059 signaled the beginning of new efforts to cultivate the area and defend it from mining encroaching.

The CADT covers 2,350.16 ha of lands and 2,039 ha of waters in Barangay Diboi in San Luis and in portions of Barangays Dalusi and Pingil in Baler, both in Aurora.

Oscar Rivera and Rubio Bacon, chieftains of Aetas in Bamban, Tarlac, and Maladlac, Pampanga, saw their lands as a way out of poverty.

It was what Conchita Pastolero, group leader of the area using the subsidies [given] to Apo Namalyan, the deity of the Pinatubo.

The biggest among the four CADTs awarded by the Arroyo, CADT R03-BAM-1204-025 consists of 10,325.200 ha in Barangays Sabo Norte, Sto Rosario, Sto. Niño, Amapal and Cabetungan in Bamban, and parts of Barangays Mancon in Mabalacat.

"Because you are now the owner of your land, nobody will bother you anymore," Ms Arroyo told the tribe members.

Its area seemed, however, daunting. "We want jobs."

Ms Arroyo then promised to explain the Sitio Pinatubo, the area growth area at Clark Freeport which runs that same area as tourism.

For its use, the state-owned Clark Development Corp. entered into a joint development agreement with 12 barangay-elders whose tribes will get 20 percent of the net income from the Sitio Pinatubo.

The project needs P12 billion to put in electricity, water, communication and roads.

The NGO Pinatubo has not created jobs for the Aeta but more than 300 are employed in Clark, mostly as maintenance workers.

The matter of jobs will be addressed as well as a social development issue, CDC president Rigoberto Rimbito told Ms Arroyo.

NCIP Commissioners Rivera and Felicio Mangayan Jr. entitled the tribes that the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act of 1997 prohibits the selling of ancestral domains covered by registered CADT.

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo exchanges banter with Aetas during the awarding of ancestral domain titles to their leaders at a rites in Floridablanca, Pampanga. AP/RAMON ESPINOSA

## Panlilio says quarry take 'unprecedented'

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—The Pampanga government has collected P395.540 million in taxes from quarrying of Mt. Pinatubo's sand in the last 23 months, surpassing the P394.473-million income that the Natural Resources Development Corp. drew in three years since 1999, said Gov. Eddie Panlilio on Thursday.

Panlilio said the amount collected from June 30, 2007, to May 28, 2009, is more than twice the P153.626 million collected in the 11 years that Sen. Manuel "Lito" Lapid and his son, Mark, served as governors.

"The low collections during the Lapid administration happened despite big-ticket infrastructure projects such as North Luzon Expressway and the Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway. Pampanga and the nearby provinces have no such big projects now, yet your provincial government has been able to collect quarry taxes in an unprecedented level," Panlilio said in a statement.

In past congressional inquiries, the Lapids said the "low demand" for sand amounted for the drop in collections.

The elder Lapid was used for gold over illegal quarry fees, but this was dismissed by the Ombudsman.

Panlilio credited the Bureau's hydrogram at Sheltapan (Bubo) committees, provincial checkpoints, provincial environment and natural resources office, members of the Provincial Mining Regulatory Board and provincial governor's office for the accomplishment.

He asked capitol employees to dedicate the accomplishment to broken bridge, who was killed on the hands of efforts to stop illegal quarrying in Floridablanca town.

At least P222-423 million of the amount will go to 38 villages and 15 towns. Panlilio asked civil society to keep watch over how these funds will be used. Rosalie Dupin, Inquirer Central Luzon

## Increase in copra costs encouraging for farmers

By Joey Galeria
Inquirer Visayas

TACLOBAN CITY—COPRA prices started to increase in Eastern Visayas, providing good news to coconut farmers.

Rosa Cardama, 70, whose family depends largely on selling copra for income, said the increasing prices of copra means the family could keep sending her grandchildren to school.

"Whenever the price of copra goes down, our lives also fall," she said. "We really depend on selling copra for us to have food on the table and so we could send my five grandchildren to school."

Cardama's family owns less than a hectare of land planted to coconuts. The land's yield is at least 200 nuts per harvest, which is every three months.

The Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA), in its report, said prices of copra climbed steadily from their previous low of P15 per kilogram to P33.50 per kg.

The regional office of the PCA said increase in demand, due largely to the rising popularity of virgin coconut oil, was jointly the reason for the price increase.

Demand for copra use for soap and synthetic rubber is also up, the PCA office said.

A copra trader, however, said prices were still dismal compared to prices last year which reached P45 per kg.

## Casino owners ordered to take back 6 workers

CLARK FREEPORT—THE National Labor Relations Commission has ordered a company owned by Hong Kong businessman Anil Lam here to reinstate five ex-employees it dismissed in July 2007 and pay them their back wages.

The decision of the NLRC's sixth division, promulgated on May 18 and released on Wednesday, ordered the Clark Resort Travel and Amusement Corp., operator of the Fontana casino and leisure park here, to take back Leonilo Agustin, Rosevina Capati, Wenefelina Dalusong, Princess Sarah Mariano, Saturnino Delola and Dionisio Ayson as shift and pit managers.

National public relations officer Professor Guzman has yet to say if the firm will contest the decision.

They should be back to their former positions without loss of seniority rights," part of the decision read.

It also said the workers should be paid their wages from the time of their dismissal.

However, the NLRC rejected their demand for P1 million in moral damages and P1 million in exemplary damages each.

"Suffice it to state that they failed to adduce the quantum of proof required for such claims to be awarded in their favor," it said.

The NLRC, however, allowed the group to get attorney's fees, which will be 10 percent of the amount to be awarded. The full amount was not issued, but the six used to receive between P40,000 and P50,000 a month.

The decision said their team can prove that the six workers connived with intended disputes, a card dealer, to alleged irregularities in the casino. Ilmarie Oreña, Inquirer Central Luzon

## Group keeps watch on ₱25M DepEd purchase

By Ric Rapajos
Inquirer Visayas

TAGBILARAN CITY—AN ANTI-graft group has teamed up with the Department of Education (DepEd) to keep corruption as far away as possible from a DepEd project to buy P25 million worth of furniture for public schools in Bohol province.

Ilgadio Jala, DepEd Bohol schools division superintendent, said the DepEd has contracted with Procurement Watch Inc. (PWI) to keep watch over the process to purchase the pieces of school furniture.

The PWI is a civil society organization formed by a group of concerned citizens with the goal of reducing, if not eliminating, graft and corruption in government through procurement reforms.

The DepEd-PWI match, also known nationwide as "Sunny Edwards," was launched at the Mango High School in Tagbilaran City.

Jala said the partnership was a "timely response" to a Commission on Audit report saying at least P12.8 million of public funds were laid to waste last year due to substandard pieces of furniture bought for public schools in several provinces.

Last year, the DepEd allotted P1.5 billion for school furniture nationwide. Many of the pieces of furniture were to be delivered this year.

The PWI will keep watch over the ongoing delivery of P13 million worth of furniture, mostly classroom desks and chairs, to different schools in Bohol.

The pieces of furniture were being bought with funds allotted last year and P15 million allotted for school year 2009-2010.

The ongoing procurement program for Bohol schools will buy 5,817 classroom tables, 11,334 chairs, 238 teachers' tables and 230 teachers' chairs.

DepEd officials and representatives of PWI and various other groups attended the launching of the monitoring team-up.

Jala said the DepEd welcomed the partnership with PWI as the government lost hundreds of millions of pesos in the past to substandard pieces of furniture made from inferior quality wood.

The Sunny Edwards project also seeks to keep watch over the other procurement programs of the DepEd.

PARENTS do their part in cleaning classrooms in a government-initiated program to refurbish schools at least costs in preparation for the opening of classes. PHOTOGRAPHER

INQUIRER Visayas

# Killing spurs Tumandok call to own land

By Hector P. Bergado Jr.
Roxas City

THE LARGE AIR-conditioned hall adorned with chandeliers echoed with the sobbing of brass orchestra members, soldiers and bandits as Mila Gipoulan, Alex Canamero and Juliesa David entered the room.

In their traditional tribal garb, all tied with gold trimmings, the women representing leaders traveled from the bloodstained villages of Tapaz and Jamindan to Cuyo to the capital in Roxas City to air their decades-old appeal.

The dates, representing 17 consecutive of Pentay's biggest and oldest indigenous people's group Tumandok, asked a hearing of the Senate committee on national minorities to repeal a presidential proclamation that converted a 72,110-hectare property that they claim as ancestral domain into a military reservation.

They brought a resolution supposedly passed by around 500 delegates of the Tumandok's bloodiest assembly, urging the return of the land they have inherited from their ancestors.

"We have survived poverty and eating only twice a day. But suffering as of our ancestral lands will kill us and condemn our culture," Gipoulan told the hearing chaired by Sen. Manuel Roxas (Liberal) "Family" Madrigal.

The hearing was prompted by a Senate resolution to investigate the plight of the Tumandok amid allegations of human rights violations perpetrated by soldiers during counterinsurgency operations in Capiz.

It was also held after the RP III "Bakiran Hinos 09-1" joint military exercises held inside the military reservation from Jan. 26 to Feb. 10.

While the committee was supposed to discuss the toll of the indigenous people's group to expand the presidential proclamation, Madrigal decided to focus on the death of a Tumandok and the wounding of another following an alleged clash with encampment soldiers in Tapaz last week.

Madrigal condemned the wounding and eventual death of Chayito Cuspilo, 30, and the wounding of his fiancé, Jessa Eulallo, 18, both of Barangay Ilaud Sur in Tapaz.

The Army's 3rd Infantry Division said Cuspilo and Eulallo were blue People's Army (NPA) members who were wounded on May 6 in a clash with troops belonging to the 47th Infantry Battalion in Barangay Ilaud Sur, an eight-hour trek from the town proper.

Soldiers, mostly tattooed with field wounds, were on patrol in the village when they were fired at, prompting them to retaliate, according to the division.

Cuspilo (identified in Ilonggo as Lebuyan by the military) was wounded in the thigh, while Eulallo was hit in the back. They were taken to the Roxas Memorial General Hospital in Roxas City on May 8.

Cuspilo died a few days later, reportedly from pneumonia and infection arising from her wound. She was purportedly three months pregnant but she was refused by the military.

Eulallo's family has denied that the couple were rebels. "They are farmers," his father Amido said during the hearing.

Amido said the couple was shot by intimate because his son had Hindu's warning that with whomsoever's gun when he noticed unidentified persons in the forest.

He explained that residents in upland barangays in Tapaz usually armed themselves to guard against robbers and because of the violence tribal disputes between the Aklanons and Panayanons, which feud led to several deaths in the past.

"We demand justice. My brother and (Cuspilo's) are not rebels," said Jessa's elder brother Bey.

The organization of indigenous people's communities also called for justice.

"This is the have of attacks against us, and the people are afraid that they will be shot right in their homes on mere suspicion that they are NPA members," said Roy Gipanes, chair of the Tumandok organization.

### Military denial

Lt. Col. Andrew Pondoc, public information officer of the 3rd ID, denied the allegations. He accused Leftist organizations that were present during the hearing of using the killings for propaganda.

He stressed that the unit gave the couple medical assistance and doubled their hospital bills.

Boy Gipanes said the latest deaths again highlighted their call for the removal of the military reservation.

In the resolution passed during their 7th triennial assembly on May 15-17 in Barangay Jardparan in Tapaz, the Tumandok also called for a stop to military operations and exercises in their communities.

The assembly, attended by around 500 representatives from Tapaz and Jamindan in Capiz and Calinog in Iloilo, reaffirmed their demand to repeal Proclamation 47 issued in 1962 by then President Diosdado Macapagal. The proclamation converted the area covering 26 of the 32 upland villages of Tapaz and seven villages of Jamindan into a military reservation.

The 3rd ID occupies the reservation, considered the country's biggest military camp next to Fort Magsaysay in Nueva Ecija. It has developed around 250 hectares of the area, erecting structures and facilities, and has used the place for combat maneuvers and training exercises.

The Tumandok people, estimated to reach 10,000, are mostly found inside the reservation.

Also called Sulodnon and Hadulanon by scholars, they are known by their dark-red breastware than her gained barrows. Great recognition. Antiho-spiders have recorded nine epics chanted for at least 162 hours.

The epics, according to studies, provide insights into the history, psyche and culture of pre-Hispanic Bisayans.

They have repeatedly complained of the presence of the military reservation for the disruption it caused on their way of life, including their hunting, farming and cultural practices because they were always suspected of being supporters or members of the NPA.

Pondoc, however, said these allegations against the military had not been substantiated by military investigations.

"We have yet to receive a formal complaint from their group about armed harassment and abuses of our soldiers," Pondoc said.

He said "most of the complaints" were during the martial law years and the military could be sanctioned 25 percent in compiled articles related to clan or tribal conflicts.

### Repeal of proclamation

The Capiz provincial board has passed three separate resolutions supporting the repeal of Proclamation 47.

In January, the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) passed on en banc resolution supporting antecedents to the resolution, which strongly affirm the right of the Tumandok to own and dominate certain under the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act of 1997.

The resolution recommended the creation of a tripartite body composed of a representative each from the Armed Forces of the Philippines, NCIP and the Tumandok to delineate the areas that will be titled to the Tumandok.

NCIP Commissioner Abel Bolongkis said that areas not presently being occupied by the military would be titled in behalf of the indigenous peoples group.

The 3rd ID opposes the recommendation to cancel the proclamation.

But the Tumandok said they could never be at peace until their have reclaimed their ancestral land.

"Our land is everything to us. We will die and our culture will vanish if the land of our forefathers continue to be denied to us," Gipoulan said.

TWO elders of the Tumandok perform the "arohulon" (chant) during the assembly.

# Ormoc farmers enjoy 'double harvest' of rice

By Ricardo S. Labro
Tacloban City

RICE FARMER ROMY GARCIA IS HAPPY that after a very long time, harvest is now very good.

Garcia, 52, reaped 20 cavans/ha of palay (unhusked rice) in his one-hectare farm, barely three months after his last harvest. His extra harvest in May was timely, he said, because his five children needed bags and other school supplies when classes open in June.

Like some rice farmers in Barangay Lubaoho in Ormoc City, Garcia is involved in the Hybrid Rice Harvest Project initiated in their village by the city government led by Mayor Eric Codilla.

Garcia harvested at least 20 cavans in the same area where he reaped instead 140 cavans of palay. The "double harvest" was made possible through a farming method called ratooning.

Ratooning is an indigenous practice in rice farming that uses shoots (culms) of the mother crop as subsequent crop for the next season. The second crop, which matures in about 75 days, requires less time, labor, water and seeding.

Ratooning is widely used in the production of sugarcane and pineapple. Many rice farmers consider hybrid seeds, but so far it is only in Ormoc. 107 kilometers from Tacloban City, where the local government and it is at the forefront of the initiative.

On May 20, a Harvest Festival was held in Barangay Lubaoho where farmers shared their experiences on cultivating with colleagues from other places and witnessed presentations on hybrid rice ratooning and some modern technologies, particularly the locally made combine rice harvester.

The equipment was brought to the village by the Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice) to assist the rice fields in Lubaoho, which enjoyed the first harvest of ratooned rice.

Erico Hilabrosa, national coordinator of the Ratooning Management And rice program and festival speaker, said the ratooning project in Ormoc was the first time to be led by the local government in the country.

Hilabrosa lauded Mayor Codilla and the farmers for the success of the hybrid rice ratooning/demonstration program.

Leo Galarde, regional executive director of the Department of Agriculture, said Ormoc "is always leading the way for us in the region" in terms of agricultural development.

Calinda noted that the average rice yield in the city reached 5.7 tons, or higher than the 5.5-ton yield in the region.

Ormoc was "at it again" when it recently launched the ratooning project that aims for a harvest of 40 cavans per hectare for every farmer beneficiary, he said.

The city's success was widely attributed to the Rice Production Enhancement Program (RPEP) that Codilla started about five years ago.

Codilla said the city government invested more than P2 million in the RPEP program "We started (in 2004) with only 300 hectares; now we have 2,000 hectares (planted) with hybrid rice," he said.

He recalled that at first, their biggest problem was the attitude of farmers, who refused to shift to modern farming, particularly on the use of hybrid seeds.

They gradually embraced the new technology with the help of the City Agricultural Services Office and the extension officials, such as subsidized fertilizers and hybrid seeds.

"We already made the first cut, and may 16 seeds again that is developed," Codilla said, referring to the RPEP. "They are now in to seed growing, vegetable and corn production, and hybrid rice ratooning, he said.

Audrey Pondoc, city agricultural coordinator, said the ratoon project would be implemented again 2010.

The DA regional office, the National Irrigation Administration and Ormoc have forged a memorandum of agreement for the joint implementation of the project at the cost of P6.31 million.

The project was started with 276 farmers in 17 barangays and initially covered an area of 300 hectares, Pondoc said.

FARMER Romy Garcia shows a handful of fresh grains of ratooned rice that were harvested from neighbor's farm.

A COMBINE rice harvester reaps the ratooned rice in Barangay Lubaoho, Ormoc City.

HUMAN rights commission chair Leila de Lima, shown here in a recent visit to Davao City, continues the struggle to prevent gangland-style executions and prosecute those behind them. De Lima clashed with Davao officials over an investigation of summary killings in the city.

# Arrested reb suspect anti-nuke activist, says group of youths

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—ONE of three suspected rebel leaders nabbed by soldiers and police men in Barangay Bulaon here is a youth leader and an anti-nuclear activist, and not a communist rebel, the chair of the Youth for Nationalism and Democracy (YND) said on Thursday.

The joint operations arrested Rebel Lieutenant, also known as Ka Pastor or leading secretary of the Bikolnet-Leninist Party of the Philippines and Rebolusyonaryong Hukbong Bayan in Bataan, Domingo Ascuncio, provincial finance officer, and Nicolas Ballatan, Bataan chair of the YND, said Brig. Gen. Benjamin Bautista, 7th Infantry Division public information officer.

Elmer Ned Arlegado, YND national chair, said Ballatan, 22, was visiting the his mom in Orani at a house on the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant (BNPP) when he was called in a meeting by two men, said to be Lieutenant and Alexander.

"Barely three weeks discussing about the anti-BNPP campaign. We, as anti-nuke campaigners, talk to anyone. Ayoko ang the PNP have no knowledge on the identities and affiliation of the two men," Arlegado said the lawyers in a telephone interview.

Bautista said the Joint's 3rd Infantry Battalion and Bataan policemen arrested the three men at 4:40 p.m. on May 27 as they held a meeting in a house in Sitio Baliuag, Barangay Bulaon in Bataan town.

Two firearms, bullets, three hand grenades and antigovernment documents were seized from them, he said.

But Arlegado said the military "planted" the firearms and documents to implicate Ballatan.

Senior Supt. Manuel Gaerlan, Bataan police director, said the police held the three men for questioning.

Gaerlan said Lieutenant has an arrest warrant for a murder case in 2007 while Alexander has two arrest warrants for murder, one for frustrated murder and another for robbery.

The two men are members of the NLRP executive committee in Central Luzon, Gaerlan said.

The police official said Ballatan has no pending arrest warrant. He did not say if Ballatan will be tried soon.

Arlegado said Ballatan's parents were besides and his eight half brothers when seen by his relatives in the Bataan police headquarters in Camp Tolentino, Balanga City, on Thursday.

Gaerlan said Ballatan tried to run away and was caught holding a hand grenade during a gunfight that led to the arrest.

Arlegado said this was not the first time that the military targeted the YND. *Tonette Orejas and Greg Bahnotan, Inquirer Central Luzon*

# Davao Sur cop charged with summary execution

DIGOS CITY—A DAVAO DEL SUR POLICE officer was charged with the murder of a drug suspect, reinforcing suspicions that the summary executions of suspected criminals in the province had police blessings.

The Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) filed charges against SPO4 Ruel Pedro, a policeman assigned to Bansalan town, in connection with the killing of a certain Reinon Bajenting, a drug suspect, on May 6.

PGS Melora Hernandez, CIDG investigator who filed the case, said Pedro was positively identified by a witness as among those who killed Bajenting.

In his sworn statement, the witness said that he was standing a meter from Bajenting when Pedro carried with two other suspects around 7:50 p.m.

The witness said Pedro held Bajenting, who was in a cross, by the shoulder while one of the suspects drew a handgun and shot the victim twice in the head and body.

The witness said he immediately hid for fear of his life while the three suspected the killing.

The witness said he personally knew Pedro because they always meet at the town's cockpit. But he said he could not identify the policeman's companions.

He said five days before the killing, Pedro was already looking for Bajenting because "he was on the list of drug personalities."

Senior Insp. Rodel Cido, CIDG provincial team leader, said the police officer has 10 days to respond to the murder case filed against him.

But he said the CIDG was confident it has enough evidence to put Pedro behind bars.

The investigator learned that Pedro connived to expose to the Bansalan police office as of yesterday.

Senior Insp. Nestor Tayaan, Bansalan police chief, admitted that the reported participation of Pedro in the execution of a suspected drug suspect in the town has dragged the name of the police into the controversial operation of a vigilante group operating in Southern Mindanao, whose activities were being investigated by the Commission on Human Rights (CHR).

Since March, the CHR has been investigating the killings in the region because of the alleged involvement of authorities.

In Davao City alone, more than 800 suspected criminals were killed since 1998, when the so-called Davao Death Squad (DDS), started its activities there.

In Mindoro, Compostela Valley, two suspected drug pushers were arrested while several others were believed wounded during a gunfight with police conducting a buybust operation on Wednesday afternoon.

Senior Insp. Rodolfo Fuentes said Reynaldo Dinglog, 24, and his relative Alfredo, also nicknamed Dinglog, 18, were cornered by heavily while trying to escape from their alleged safe house in Sitio Anahilaw in Barangay Poblacion during the 1 p.m. raid.

Other suspects were able to elude arrest but known of Mindoro leading to a confield at the back of their hideout indicated the scene of them may have been wounded, Fuentes said.

"Some of the suspects posed to look on but denied their companions were before our personnel have could move in. We were fired at so we retaliated," Fuentes said Inquirer.

He said they seized several rounds of suspected shabu, drug paraphernalia and an improvised weighing scale during the raid. *With reports from Ellalyn de Vera-Ruiz, Aquirre, Orlando Dinoy and Tonette Orejas, Inquirer Mindanao*

THE INFLUENZA A(H1N1) swine flu virus gives pigs another hairraising shot at what is commonly called swine flu—but did the World Health Organization get to a more technical name.

# Hoax text message on flu seen as bid to sow panic

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer Central Luzon

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—A SENSATIONAL text message claiming that a confirmed case of influenza A(H1N1) in Angeles City has been taken to the Jose B. Lingad Memorial Regional Hospital in this Pampanga capital.

"Negative. Huli ang balita (The report is erroneous)," Dr. Rio Magpantay, DOH director in Central Luzon, said via Philstarnews.

The original message, sent to the DOH has still to identify, tried to lend the text message some sense of credibility. It carried the name of Dr. Rachel Yabut and Jun Fernando Mitos Dayat Rodriguez and their contact numbers.

The text message has been passed around since Tuesday, reaching government officials, reporters, businessmen, drivers and teachers in the province.

Rodriguez called a press conference on Wednesday to deny that the text message came from him or from the city government. The city government will issue health advisories on the guidance of the DOH, he said.

Magpantay said as a matter of policy, no Health Secretary Francisco Duque III has statements confirmed AH1N1 cases.

If an official text message is trying to "sow panic or fear" among the people, Magpantay said, urging General Luna residents to inquire with the regional DOH through telephone number (045) 455-1137.

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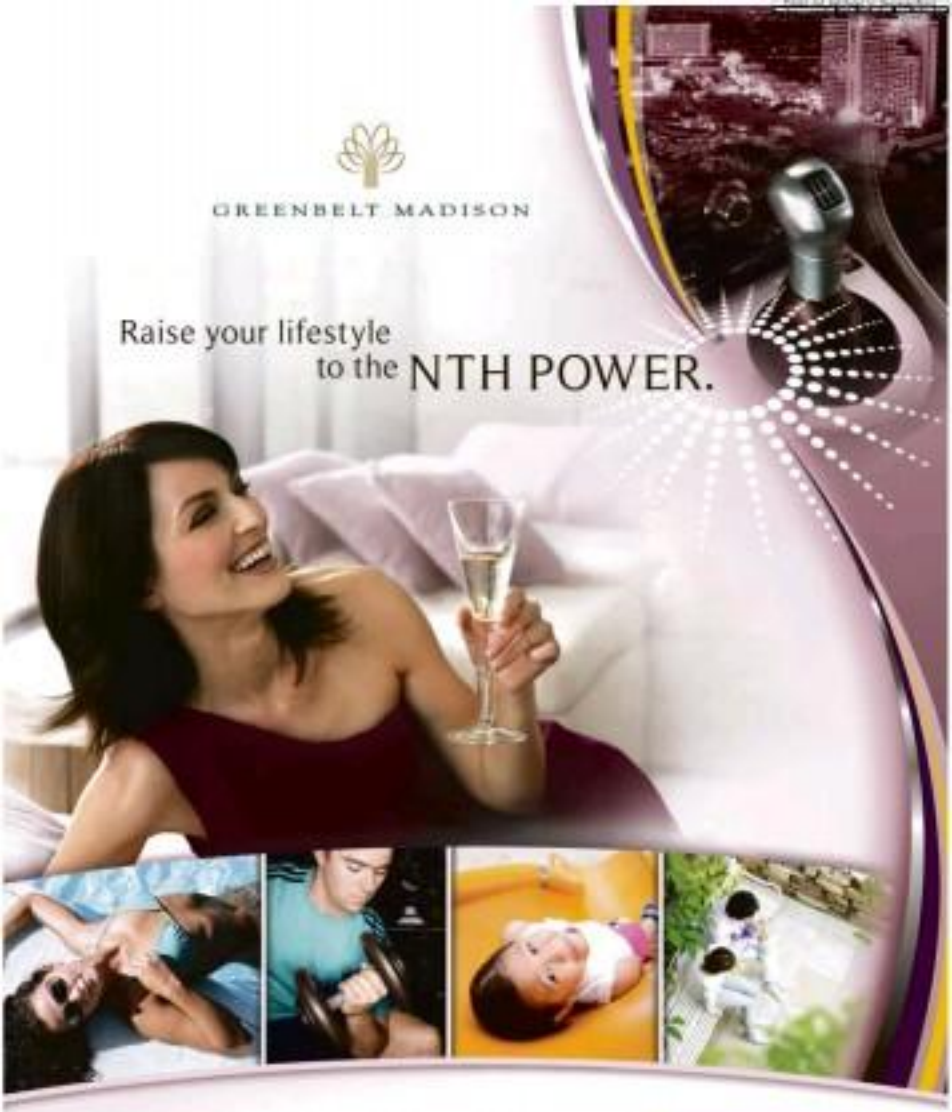



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Editor Abelardo S. Ulandey

# Uproar over oil depot stay

## Charges set vs Lim, proponents of Ord. 7177

By Tina G. Santos

A GROUP OF LAWYERS IS SET TO FILE CHARGES on Monday against Manila officials responsible for enacting controversial Ordinance 7177.

Lawyer Vladimir Calingo of the Social Justice Society said they will file an administrative complaint at the Office of the Ombudsman against Mayor Alfredo Lim, Vice Mayor Francisco "Isko Moreno" Domagoso and the 26 councilors who were proponents of the ordinance.

"They should be charged for neglect of duty and violation of public office and conduct prejudicial to the public interest," Calingo said.

Lim approved on Thursday the ordinance which allows the Pandacan oil depot to continue operating in the city.

Calingo said that they will ask for the a motion for the city officials' preventive suspension.

"To prevent them from influencing the outcome of the case," the lawyers explained.

On top of these, Calingo said they intend to ask the Supreme Court to order Lim to stop the implementation of the ordinance, which he claimed is unvalid and inherently unlawful.

Councilor Ma. Lourdes Isip-Elorza, an advocate of the depot's relocation, earlier said that she, too, will exhaust all legal means to question the validity of the measure.

"We cannot be complacent when the safety and health of our citizens are at stake ... I believe that environmental, social and health factors, especially the lives of millions of Manileños, far outweigh economic considerations," Garcia said.

Garcia further explained that the ordinance also allows highly pollutive and extremely hazardous industries such as pesticides, industrial alcohol, fertilizers, chemicals, and the like.

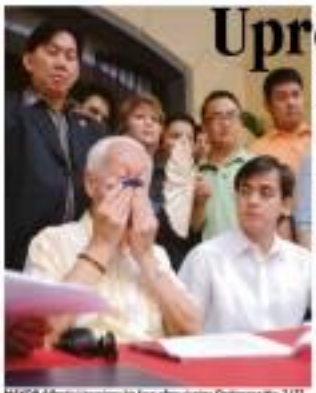
"The worldwide trend is to restrict urban planning to be depots, and even highly pollutive and extremely hazardous industries to be relocated or placed in the countryside, far from people, homes, schools, hospitals and property. Why are we moving in the opposite direction?" she stressed.

But Lim claimed he stands by his decision.

"I have it where people threaten me ... they can file all the charges against me, but that's my decision," he told groups opposing the ordinance.

Ordinance 7177 is titled Amends Ordinance 8027 under which parts of the Asia and Petrochem were reclassified from industrial to commercial zones, therefore banning the operations of the oil depot.

Earlier this month, the Supreme Court issued a ruling ordering with finality the closing down of the oil depot.



MAYOR Alfredo Lim swipes to face after signing Ordinance No. 7177 on Thursday witnessed by Vice Mayor Isko Moreno (right, seated) and city council members. JESSE KABILING

# Council decision act of selling out, says militant environmental group

By Alexis Pape

MILITANT ENVIRONMENTAL group Kalikasan People's Network for the Environment (Kalikasan-PNE) yesterday slammed Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim for his decision to let oil companies stay at the Pandacan oil depot.

In a statement yesterday, Kalikasan-PNE national coordinator Clemente Bautista lamented that the oil depot would pose a threat to the environment and to the safety and security of residents in the area.

Bautista also said that Lim's decision was "in act of selling out the residents of Manila and organizations who lobbied for the relocation of the Pandacan oil depot."

"After all the claims of having sleepless nights and thinking of what's best for the people, Lim still sided with the companies. Now, it's the people who will have to face sleep over their safety and security," said Bautista.

He added that Lim made the decision despite conducting several dialogues with different parties, government agencies and concerned organizations.

The other day, Lim signed City Council Ordinance 7177, which allows the country's largest oil, the Pilipinas Petron, Shell and Caltex to continue using the oil depot.

According to Lim, his decision was based on the economic and social implications that might affect the city if the oil companies move out. On the other hand, Erap who favored the ordinance, laid out scenarios of job displacements, oil shortages and closure of depend-ent industries if the companies go to a different area in the country.

"These scenarios are just excuses to continue business as usual and can be addressed by the companies and politicians if they want to," Bautista said.

He also explained that it was the responsibility of the oil companies, and not the city of Manila, to vacate the realties and job security of their workers once they transfer their depot to a safe and appropriate area.

# Sandigan: 'Status quo' in Rodriguez

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr. and DJ Yap

THE SANDIGANBAYAN YESTERDAY ordered to preserve the "status quo" in Rodriguez, Rizal, amid the ongoing confusion on who is really the sitting mayor.

In a phone call to the Inquirer, Rodriguez Mayor Pedro Cuenco confirmed he had received a copy of the resolution which he said was consistent with his reasons for refusing to honor the suspension order served against him last month.

In a resolution on Friday afternoon, the anti-graft court Second Division said: "The parties are directed to maintain the status quo and adhere the unprovoked performance of the incumbent mayor after the second motion for reconsideration is fully resolved by this Court."

"After all the claims of having sleepless nights and thinking of what's best for the people, Lim still sided with the companies. Now, it's the people who will have to face sleep over their safety and security," said Bautista.

The Sandiganbayan ordered Cenpelo preventive suspension on Oct. 3, 2008, and ordered his motion for reconsideration on March 17. Cuenco then charges of grave abuse of authority and grave misconduct for allegedly illegally demolishing houses being built by 43 families on a property in Barangay Burgos in 2002.

But Cuenco again filed a second motion for reconsideration on April 8 and refused to honor the suspension order the Department of Interior and Local Government served him the order on April 13. Cuenco said the court order was not yet final pending the resolution of his second motion for reconsideration.

The DILG memo in this memo Jesse Cruz at acting mayor but Executive Secretary Edwardo Ermita directed DILG Secretary Ronaldo Puno on April 22 to "hold in abeyance" the implementation of the suspension order.

Cuenco told the Sandiganbayan resolution declaring status quo came at the right time because the situation is becoming considered "volatile."

Cuenco also said the result of the mayor's seat has resulted in the delayed release of salary for some of the town's employees.

## MSD Philippines kicks off Global Volunteerism Program with Community Day at Montalban

Global research-based pharmaceutical company Merck Sharp & Dohme recently held their Community Day in Montalban, Rizal - the relocation site of families living along the Pasig River. There they partnered with ABS-CBN Foundation Inc. and the Philippine National Red Cross in the community development program Hand Bag sa Ilog Pasig.

The Hand Bag sa Ilog Pasig is a project that aims to rehabilitate the Pasig River in cooperation with various government and private institutions. MSD Philippines is the first company to support this program's efforts in community development and joined 300 families for a day in a wide range of activities which includes providing health and safety lectures to the parents and leaders of the community on first aid and prevention of diseases, painting houses, planting trees, conducting a feeding program for undernourished children, and hosting learning activities for the kids.

All 400 employees of MSD participated in the day's activities sharing their time and talents with members of the community. Projects like this are important for the company as they go beyond just making great cost donations but are sharing talent and expertise in building the capacity of the community. In addition, Community Day is the kickoff here in the Philippines of the Global Volunteerism Program initiated by MSD. This global effort makes sure there are community-centered programs in every country where Merck and affiliates operate including the 'Lend-a-Hand' program by MSD Malaysia, 'Clean up Australia Day' by MSD Australia, and 4th Education by MSD Brazil just to name a few. MSD Philippines' Community Day is their contribution to a global effort spearheaded by the company.

Moreover, Community Day is also a way of fostering teamwork and camaraderie between MSD employees in all divisions while instilling a spirit of volunteerism across the company.

Indeed, Community Day was not only a strong kickoff of the Global Volunteerism Program sponsored by MSD, but also a great opportunity for MSD to give back to the people and strengthen bonds in their own community. This kick off program will definitely give way to even more volunteer efforts in the future.

# Circus at the Senate

WHEN THE PEOPLE ARE hungry, give them a circus.

That's just what the Senate did the other day.

It featured the video sex scandal, starring a movie starlet and a celebrity doctor, in order to the public's baser instincts.

The show covered on national television and radio. Or the choice of Sen. Jinggoy Estrada, who orchestrated it, for more public exposure.

She is taking as parents or concerned citizens.

Decent and intelligent people could only shake their heads in shock and disbelief.

They can't believe the sleazy body that was once composed of intellectual giants—Basilio of Claro M. Recto, Camilo Osmeña, Raul Manglapus, Lorenzo Tañada, Arturo Tolentino, Jose Diokno, and oh, yes, Ferdinand Marcos—is now peopled by flamboyant and posh or near swashbuckler who roll more than flesh, true-to-by the kids.

It's understandable for Sen. Rong Revilla, himself a man of the world, to denounce the sex video on the Senate floor.

It was a vain attempt by Revilla to stop the showing of Hayden Kho's sex with other women.

ON TARGET
Ramon Tulfo

But Jinnky Madrigal? Why did she have to conduct a hearing on a scandal that everybody knows (won't announce to anything?

What has to be gained by the hearing but a grand public spectacle?

Madrigal is no different from the exhibitionist Estrada.

The passing of hurtful words on Hayden Kho by a spectator before the theatrical hearing at the Senate is a portent of something worse to come for the rest of us.

The drama was stirred police officers and mobile cameramen always ferreting out news in sympathy for Kho's victims.

There are many more men like Alfong who are fathers, brothers, boyfriends of girls of the same age as the young women now suffering public shame and humiliation as a result of the sex video.

The senator could turn into a bullet in the deep edge of a battle.

Kho said by said Sheilla were high on ecstasy, a libido-enhancing drug, while they were drinking it.

The drug was provided by a very powerful individual whom Kho refused to name for fear of his and his family's safety.

Ecstasy is not only used by shameless personalities and young people of rich parents, at least one Cabinet member.

The Cabinet member and his friends were reported by this source to have used ecstasy during an orgy with prostitutes aboard the official's yacht.

The source of my report was one of the prostitutes the Cabinet official hired.

* * *

I laughed out loud when President Gloria took a direct hand in the controversy involving the drug trafficking of the two exiled Alabang Boys.

I hailed the President herself about the sex orgies of the Cabinet member and the hostesses given out to the participants. I said in mirth:

Now comes Glo's revelation that a powerful individual was the source of the fantasy he used for his allegedly sexual.

Who could that powerful individual be?

# Sacked head of state-run aviation school cries foul

By Jerry E. Esplanada

EMBATTLED PHILIPPINE STATE College of Aeronautics (PhilCA) president Emelito Jimenez yesterday disputed the Commission on Higher Education's (CHED) order dismissing him as PhilCA's head, saying the decision was "still pending for reconsideration" by the Ombudsman.

At the same time, Jimenez assailed CHED chair Romulo Neri's supposed "secret deal" with Angeles whom he said "acted like a dictator" by booting him out of the country's only state-run aviation school.

According to Jimenez, the garbo had violated the Rules of Procedure of the Ombudsman, ensuring "If a motion for reconsideration is filed a decision cannot be implemented yet."

"Until this writing, the Ombudsman has not decided on the motion for reconsideration," Jimenez pointed out.

In a phone interview, Jimenez called himself a "victim of injustice."

"While doing glowing reasons (I have not done anything wrong). With all my infractions, I even gave him a memorandum refund. (Angeles) wanted my dismissal so he could save an explosion on Philcash acting president," Jimenez told the Inquirer. He was referring to CHED chief Romulo Neri did not act on it.

Meanwhile, Jimenez's wife Filipina Fernando has been replaced by Engr. Nicolas Mina of the Institute of Engineering and Technology as head of Philcash's Flying School.

The Jimenezes, along with five members of the Philcash faculty and awards committee, are also facing charges before the Ombudsman for rigging the bidding for the purchase of five refurbished Cessna training aircraft worth at least P23 million.

In a decision dated April 23, 2009, the Ombudsman found Jimenez guilty of the "serious misconduct of inefficiency, oppression and gross dissolution." He was ordered dismissed from government service.

CHED had received a copy of the order as early as May 2008 but then CHED chief Romulo Neri did not act on it.

Meanwhile, Jimenez's wife Filipina Fernando has been replaced by Engr. Nicolas Mina of the Institute of Engineering and Technology as head of Philcash's Flying School.

The Jimenezes, along with five members of the Philcash faculty and awards committee, are also facing charges before the Ombudsman for rigging the bidding for the purchase of five refurbished Cessna training aircraft worth at least P23 million.

A DELIVERY truck loaded with hollow blocks rolls amucked after it rammed a refrigerating shop along Mina Service Road, Marikina, Pasay City, early Friday morning. Police said the owner of the shop, who was not identified, was injured.

# Arraignment of lady driver in 'Amiel' case deferred anew

By Julie M. Aurelio

THE ARRAIGNMENT OF the lady driver who ran over an Ateneo grade school boy was deferred anew as a Quezon City court has yet to resolve a previous request to have the charges suspended to homicide.

The arraignment of Theresa Yvonne Lobi, who is facing two counts of reckless imprudence resulting in homicide and damage to property, was moved again pending a court resolution.

The Ateneodefense lawyer, Luis Pangalangan, said the court has yet to issue a resolution on whether or not the complaint will be subjected to a preliminary investigation by the city prosecutor's office.

"At this is no resolution yet, the arraignment was moved to Aug. 13, even if we can still arrange a preliminary investigation. there is a chance that it will be moved," he said.

Pangalangan said his client, Amiel's father Jose Antonio, appeared in court yesterday morning before the rule of Judge Angelene Quinayo-Sala of Regional Trial Court Branch 83.

"Our hearing was over in the judge was on official business.

**Upgrading**

Pangalangan said they are confident that the court is going to rule in favor of a preliminary investigation, as which there is only civil suit for the upgrading of charges to homicide.

The Ateneodefense lawyer said Lobi's lawyers, Roland Mallonga and Lobi herself will still phone were unavailable as of press time.

In an interview, Ateneo boy's father said they have received word that the drivers manager, must has forced a compromise to reach the victim and waive laws for the safety of the kids.

Atenoneo's son, Amiel, was killed in February after Lobi was allegedly too reckless in driving her vehicle along Katipunan Avenue. The grade school boy was run over by the speeding lady driver while crossing the road.

## Guard dragged, run over by truck

A BICYCLE-RIDING SECURITY guard was killed after he was accidentally dragged then run over by a 10-wheeler truck before dawn yesterday in Manila.

Joseph Codero, identified with the Perpetual Help College in Manila, was crushed to death by the truck (SFZ-580) driven by Rolando Dionisio, 35, of Sitio Gitna, San Isidro, Nueva Ecija.

Police said the truck was making a right turn on Mt Lucon and 10 Lavalle Streets in Sampaloc around 5:30 a.m. when it caught the strap of Codero's sling bag and dragged him.

Jess mar le L. Andrade

## *Got complaints vs erring cops? Don't call 117*

IF YOU HAVE COMPLAINTS against erring or tormenting policemen, don't call police hotline 117 as somebody's life might be in danger, a police official told the public.

Chief Supt. Roberto Rosales, Criminal Investigation Police regional director said in a statement that the public should not their hotline number only for emergency purposes because the fatal time months dropped by some callers, thus, the police unit's response time would be delayed.

Rosales said a slight delay of moments of under review responders, including the PNP Bureau of Fire Protection, the National Bureau of Investigation, Philippine Drug Enforcement Unit may risk the life of someone needing help.

He now enjoy group public safety consumers, the public may call other hotlines like the regional complaint unit or hotline 8-1-1 or text 0920-9-11-911 or e-mail pnp.pio@gmail.com or text complaints to 2920.

Sheila Crisostomo Cirilo

## Metro Briefs

### Human rights course for cops

MORE than a hundred policemen will be sent to the Quezon City Police District (QCPD) are expected to attend a refresher course on human rights to be conducted by the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) today. CHR chair Leila de Lima said in a statement that there should be an "intensification of unity" on security forces on human rights. "The knowledge of human rights and the rules for police also to deal with public especially in highly intense volatile such as rallies, walking incident, etc.," De Lima said.

Nikko Dizon

### Jealous man stabs waiter

A TODAS waiter died while being treated in a hospital after he got stabbed by his friend's enraged former lover on Thursday. Police said the victim, Adonis Bolivar, 19, died from a stab wound in the abdomen inflicted by Michael Santiago. Investigators showed Santiago barged into the Abby-Z Bar on Tropical Avenue where Bolivar and Santiago's former girlfriend, Marilyn Rivera, were both working at around 11 p.m. He allegedly got angry when he found the two dancing in a room in the bar and stabbed Bolivar. Rivera was not harmed. Police are now looking for Santiago.

Julie M. Aurelio

### Theft suspect shot dead

A SUSPECTED thief ended up dead after he was shot by a security guard whom gun he gang tried to grab after an attempt to steal motorcycles from a construction site in San Juan City. The vehicle that suspected Jerry Rivera and his accomplices stole were scrapping and loitered in a lot along Ortigas Avenue near Line, prompting cops to think it was part of traffic accident. Rivera died while undergoing treatment at the Medical City for a gunshot wound in the right shoulder.

Julie M. Aurelio


METRO
Citizen's Call

Your City of Attractions and Distinctions is made up of stories.
Your stories. Tell us all about it.

- Did a rajaugo make your day?
- Garbage dumped on your street or make your day?
- Basag daggings forever on the street where you live?
- Are you up in arms against the demolition of an ancestral house?
- Angry by a delay-beset barangay project with a big positive impact in your community?
- Got stuck in gridlock?
- Fed up with cussing and fighting neighbors?
- In town an everyday with model in your neighborhood?
- Delightful/dreadful facts on your way to work?

TEXT: [illegible]
0918-6985566
P.S. [illegible]


# Makati cleans roads for school opening

By Allison W. Lopez

THE MAKATI CITY GOVERNMENT has ordered the closing of major roads and sidewalks to ensure the safety of students as classes begin on Monday.

Department of Environmental Services (DES) chief Dondie Villar said the clearing operations under "Oplan Balik sa Eskwela" will be held until the early morning of June 1.

Aside from clearing the streets leading to the city's 28 public elementary and nine high schools, Villar said garbage will be patrolled to make it more visible and pleasing to the eye.

The clearing operations, which may affect vending stalls and fences, are in line with city ordinance 2005-031, which required structures to provide a two-meter setback from the government property line.

Villar said the removal of obstructions will provide safety to the public and pave way to the city's improvements.

"BALIK ESKWELA" Muntinlupay City Mayor Jaime Fresnedi (second from left) leads in the ceremonial turnover of school supplies to pupils of Muntinlupay public schools during ceremonies held at the New Executive Building. The project is in line with the "Balik Eskwela" program. Also in photo are Vice Mayor Rose Beatriz Nieto and Muntinlupay City Schools Division Supt. Bro. Florencio Domingo.

The WORLD

Editor Lorraine B. Ocampo

# Iran says US behind deadly mosque blast

TEHRAN—IRANIAN OFFICIALS ON FRIDAY accused the US of hiring those behind a suicide bombing of a Shiite mosque in southeastern Iran that killed 25 people and linked the attack to next month's presidential vote.

"Three people involved with the terrorist incident were arrested," Jalal Sayadi, deputy provincial governor of the Sistan-Baluchistan province that borders Pakistan and Afghanistan, told Iran-news agency.

"According to the information obtained they were hired by America and the agents of the insurgents," Sayadi said. Iranian officials usually use the term "global arrogance" in reference to Iran's arch-foe the United States.

The suicide attack during Thursday evening prayers at the Shiite Amir al-Momenin mosque in Zahedan, the eastern capital of Sistan-Baluchistan, killed 25 people and wounded 125 others.

Iran's former premier and presidential hopeful Mir Hossein Mousavi also blamed "foreign forces" for Thursday's attack.

Mousavi at a media conference with journalists from international news networks said local clerics such as the mosque bombing "have neither been influenced nor supported by foreign forces."

"The fewer foreign forces in the region, the more security there is. They provoke extremists in the region such as the incident in Zahedan," said Mousavi, one of four candidates standing in the June 12 presidential election.

Iran has in the past blamed US and British agents based in neighboring Iraq and Afghanistan for launching attacks on border provinces with significant ethnic minority populations.

Sistan-Baluchestan province has a large ethnic Baluch minority.

Ali Mohammad Azad, the governor general of the province, said the attack was part of a plan by "bandits and terrorists" to disturb the "order in the province before the election considering the insecurity in the eastern neighboring countries."

He was quoted by the official IRNA news agency late Thursday as blaming "terrorists" for the explosion.

"It was a terrorist attack and the fourth was exploded by a terrorist," Azad said, adding that soon after the explosion "members of a terrorist group who wanted to get out of Zahedan were arrested."

"The members of the terrorist group intended to explode bombs in some other areas of Zahedan, but they have been arrested due to the efforts of the provincial intelligence office."

Four opposing unnamed sources said the "suicide attacker exploded the bomb in the women's section" of the mosque.

A list released by the agency, however, showed the names of 15 male victims. It did not identify the remaining eight victims.

According to IRNA, Zahedan's Friday prayer leader Ayatollah Abbas Ali Soleymani told reporters that "one of the main persons involved (in the attack) had been arrested" and "he will soon be punished in front of the mosque."

Then said the mosque is the second largest Shiite mosque in Zahedan and also a "gathering place for revolutionary thinker." /AFP

## Seoul worries Nokor may take more action

TEARS of thousands bid farewell at a funeral carrying the coffin of former South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun across on a street in Seoul on May 29. /AFP

SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA—South Korea said on Saturday belligerent North may be preparing aggressive moves after Chinese Beijing hosts were spotted leaving a disputed sea border dividing the peninsula.

South Korea and the United States have already raised the military alert level to the region after North threw leftward Monday's nuclear test with missile launches and a threat of war.

In New York, the United States and Japan circulated a draft UN Security Council resolution to key council members that condemned Pyongyang's second nuclear test and called for strict enforcement of UN sanctions imposed on North Korea after its first atomic test in October 2006.

"Our forces are watching these movements [by Chinese fishing boats] with the view that they could be signs that indicate the possibility of North Korea's aggression," Defense Ministry spokesperson Kim Jeo-jin said.

The escalating tensions had little fresh impact on financial markets, which took a bit further in the week after the nuclear test. Traders said even though North Korea's belligerent rhetoric is striking a new note, effects of military confrontation, not enough yet to significantly deter investors.

There have been two deadly naval skirmishes on the disputed maritime border in the past 10 years and the North has warned another could happen soon.

The 2009 and 2002 clashes were in June, the peak of a lucrative flatfish crab season when fishing fleets jockey for the best spots near the contested maritime border.

"Now that Kim's talk of '...to all-out war, we threatens are worried," said 48-year-old Yeongpyong Island fisherman Kim Jin-sik. "Nowadays when we go out, we know we are facing dangers."

The island lies off the west coast in the Yellow Sea, to waters the North claims but the South has occupied since the end of the 1950-53 Korean War.

The joint command for the 28,500 US troops supporting South Korea's 670,000 soldiers has raised its alert a notch to signify a serious threat from South Korea.

That is the highest threat level since the North's only other nuclear test in October 2006. Reuters

## *Tears, anger at funeral of S. Korea's 'people's president'*

SEOUL—HUNDREDS OF A SEA OF yellow balloons and candles mourners, Chun Ui-Oh says she knows little about politics but feels overwhelmed with grief for South Korea's late "people's president."

"My heart is bleeding. Something is very wrong when a former president commits suicide," said the 70-year-old, wearing a yellow armband bearing the smiling face of ex-leader Roh Moo-Hyun, who leapt to his death on Saturday.

Tens of thousands...many holding placards reading "You are my president for eternity"—lined the streets of Seoul to pay their last respects to Roh, who was credited with striving to make South Korea more democratic.

Rows of Roh's campaign colors.

"I am so sad. He was a president of the common people," said Lee Seung-Hee, a 53-year-old government worker in a black suit and yellow tie, his eyes red and voice strained with emotion.

"Even if I did not support all his policies, such as the efforts to conclude a free trade deal with the US, he made great efforts to take care of the underprivileged and destroy authoritarianism in every corner of government."

The former lawyer held office from 2003 until 2008, committed suicide after being questioned as a suspect in a corruption scandal.

Many supporters say they could more than a whiff of politics in the probe.

He was the victim of humiliating and politically motivated corruption allegations aimed at weakening opponents of the conservative governments," said Ryu Sung-hoon, a 24-year-old student.

As incumbent President Lee Myung-Bak took his seat on a lavish throne at Roh's funeral at a former royal palace, Roh's supporters

WEEPING as South Korean mourn

matching the service on a large screen nearby joined and shouted his praises.

Hundreds of riot police carrying shields evaded out of sight nearby, part of a force of 13,000 deployed in central Seoul amid fears that a national outpouring of grief might spark antigovernment protests.

But there was no sign of trouble as the funeral service at Gyeongbuk Palace, attended by 3,000 people, ended with a 21-gun salute.

The funeral procession then made its way through the city center at walking pace, led by a national flag spread between four reds, who said it was carrying a giant picture of Roh.

Mourners wept and threw yellow paper airplanes onto the roof of the hearse.

The procession halted for 30 minutes at Seoul Plaza for a traditional ceremony to bid farewell to the departed.

Thousands there chanted, "I love you, Mr President" and "We'll remember you forever."

Mourners sang Roh's favorite songs including one entitled "Wish Love" before the hearse moved away as thousands followed.

"When I heard the news about his death, I was shocked and lost for words," said housewife Lee Ae-Ran.

"President Roh had little support from the establishment but he was a president with philosophy and loved by common people." /AFP

## WORLDBRIEFS

### Taliban issues warning, then bombs rip Pakistan

PESHAWAR, Pakistan—Multiple bombs exploded in two Pakistani cities on Thursday, just hours after Taliban groups warned people to evacuate several large cities, saying they were preparing "major attacks." The groups also claimed responsibility for a bloody attack in Lahore a day earlier that killed at least 26 people. Three bombs detonated in Peshawar, northwest of Pakistan's capital, and one exploded in Dera Ismail Khan, in the country's troubled west, killing at least 11 people and wounding dozens of others. /AFP

### Pentagon plans new arm to wage computer wars

WASHINGTON—The Pentagon plans to create a new military command for cyberspace, administration officials said on Thursday, stepping up preparations by the armed forces to conduct both offensive and defensive computer warfare. The military command would complement a civilian effort to be announced by President Barack Obama on Friday that would overhaul the way the United States safeguards its computer networks. Obama, officials said, will announce the creation of a White House office—reporting to both the National Security Council and the National Economic Council—that will coordinate a multibillion dollar effort to restrict access to government computers and protect systems that run the stock exchanges, steer global banking transactions and manage the air traffic control system. /AFP

### Suu Kyi's lawyers optimistic about case

RANGOON—Lawyers for Burma detained opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi expressed optimism about her case after the only witness allowed to testify for the defense addressed the court in her trial on charges of violating house arrest. Giving encouraging news after court sessions, Nyan Win said Thursday he is hopeful for the case to be heard on Monday. The defense has argued that there is no legal basis for the charge that Suu Kyi violated the terms of her house arrest when an uninvited American swam secretly to her home. Suu Kyi's supporters fear that she may be found guilty because the court is under the influence of the ruling junta and usually metes out harsh punishment for political dissidents. But one of Suu Kyi's lawyers, Nyan Win, said Thursday night he was "very confident of victory. If the trial is carried out according to law." /AP

### Merck says WHO prequalifies vaccine Gardasil

NEW YORK—Merck and Co. said on Tuesday the World Health Organization granted prequalification to Gardasil, a vaccine intended to prevent the human papillomavirus, a disease that can cause cervical cancer. Merck said the WHO approval would make it possible for agencies like the United Nations Children's Fund to use Gardasil in national immunization programs. The vaccine is intended to block four strains of HPV that are responsible for most cervical cancers, as well as genital warts. The stock advanced 20 cents to close at $26.92 in the regular session. /AP

## 20,000 Tamils reported killed in final assault

LONDON—MORE THAN 20,000 Tamil civilians were killed in the 8-and weekdays by the Sri Lankan government in its separatist rebels this month, which ended Asia's longest civil war, a British newspaper said on Friday.

The figure was three times the official casualty figure, the Times said.

Fighting ended when Sri Lankan troops crushed Tamil Tiger rebels accused of holding tens of thousands of civilians in human shields, said the Times.

Citing its own investigation, the paper said most of the 20,000 deaths were caused by the government.

Sri Lanka has banned its forces stopped using heavy weapons on April 27 and suspected a no-fly zone where 100,000 men, women and children were sheltering, the newspaper reported.

Confidential UN documents indicated 7,000 civilians died in the final week up to the end of April, said the Times, noting that journalists have been barred from the conflict zone.

But citing aerial photographs, official documents, witness accounts and expert testimony, the paper said the death toll mounted, with 1,000 civilians killed each day until May 18, the day after the death of Tamil Tiger leader Velupillai Prabhakaran.

Photographs published by the Times appeared to show mass mounds, indicating makeshift burial grounds, the paper said. /AFP

## P100k in cash prizes up for grabs in low-salt recipe contest

Got a delicious low-salt recipe? Join the "Low-Salt Recipe Contest" and get a chance to win big cash prizes.

The Low-Salt Recipe Contest aims to increase public awareness on how everyday Filipino dishes can be made delectable and healthy even with minimal use of salt. Correct mechanics are as follows:

- The contest is open to all Filipinos, male or female, aged 18 years and above.

- The recipe should be a common everyday Filipino dish, preferably written in English, and include a brief explanation of how the dish was made delectable even with minimal salt use.

- When submitting your recipe, please include your name, age, gender, latest blood pressure reading, and contact details (address, landline/cellphone number).

- Participants may e-mail their recipes with photo of actual plated dish to lowsalt@hmoworks.com from May 17 to 31, 2009. Entries should be received by 5 p.m. May 31, 2009.

- Judging will be held on June 1, 2009 by a Board of Judges composed of representatives from the participating institutions.

- Judges' decision is final. Winners will be announced on June 2, 2009 and featured on GTV 11 Sweet Life.

- First prize is P100,000, second prize P50,000, and third prize is P15,000. Fourth to 10th prize winners will receive P5,000 each.

The Low-Salt Recipe Contest is a public health initiative of the Philippine Society of Hypertension (PSH) and Novartis Healthcare Philippines in collaboration with the Department of Health (DoH), Philippine Heart Association (PHA), and Philippine Society of Nephrology (PSN).

The contest is part of the country's celebration of World Hypertension Day (WHD) last May 17, 2009, which highlighted the link between high salt intake and high blood pressure. With the theme, "Salt and Hypertension: Two Silent Killers", the 2009 WHD campaign aims to raise public awareness on blood pressure control and monitoring, and the need to reduce salt intake to lower the risk for stroke, heart attack, and kidney disease due to high blood pressure.

High salt intake is the root of high blood pressure in about 3 out of 10 adults. High blood pressure is the number one risk factor for cardiovascular diseases, which is the world's number one cause of death worldwide. Over 10 million Filipinos have high blood pressure, which is one of the top 5 causes of death in the country. Reducing daily salt intake by half could save approximately 2.5 million people a year dying from strokes and heart attacks worldwide

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WHAT'S INSIDE
■ Laylo downs Viet, closes in on Subic leaders /A23

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■ LeBron keeps Cavaliers alive /A24

STA. LUCIA'S Herbert Gonzales (No. 1) and import Anthony Johnson gang up on Coca-Cola import James Posey during a rebound play while Pharex Aquino looks on. ALEXEY SALVADOR

# Realtors trip Tigers, claim q'final ticket

By Marang R. Castillo

ANTHONY JOHNSON PROMISED STA. LUcia coach Koy Fernandez that the Realtors will get to play another day.

The rowdy high-flyer kept his vow and scored 42 points and 26 rebounds to power Sta. Lucia to a 94-88 victory over Coca-Cola last night in the Moonlite-PBA Fiesta Cup at the Araneta Coliseum.

Johnson, who started making a bold declaration to his coach, Johnson scored more than 30 points in each of the last three periods to silence single-handedly punch a quarterfinal ticket for the Realtors and pull the curtains down on the Tigers' campaign.

Those 26 boards by Johnson were just FIVE caroms shy, and they were more than half of the output of the entire Coca-Cola crew, which drove away a seven-point lead early in the third period to go down and finish eighth for the consolation.

GAMES TOMORROW
(Ahtletic Coliseum)
1 p.m.—Barangay Ginebra vs Sta. Lucia
4:30 p.m.—Talk 'N Text vs Red Bull

"What can I say about my import?" Fernandez told scribes. "He's really one of the best in the tournament."

"And before the game, he told me that we should refurbish our defensive practice for tomorrow (today), because he said he doesn't want to go home (to the United States) yet. He wanna to keep playing."

The win put the Realtors in a best-of-three series opposite Burger King-starring Barako, a rested Petromen league has teams will survive to give reigning MVP Kelly Williams ample time to recover and make his return.

Williams missed his sixth game last night due to blood problems, but the Realtors didn't show signs of slowing down with Ryan Reyes shooting 10-of-16 in the fourth and Jimy Dandan finishing with 11 points.

Asi Taulava was held down to just six points in the first three periods, while James Yap was good for only four points in the fourth as the Realtors, who blossomed into one of the best defensive teams in the league under Fernandez' watch, won the game by playing top-notch defense yet again.

But their defensive effort took a backseat to the way Johnson played offense, with all 16 of his fourth quarter points coming in the clutch—and in acrobatic ways at that—with none bigger than a two-handed follow-up slam off a Dorell Miranda miss which made it 80-84 with 2:11 left.

The scores:

**Final Game**

**STA. LUCIA (94)**—Johnson 42, Reyes 16, Dandan 11, Miranda 8, Yee 5, Laguerta 3, Taulava 3, Espino 2, Gonzales 2, Daoli 2

**COCA-COLA (88)**—Posey 23, Barroca 19, Yeaker 19, Jalalon 8, Tuano 5, Calimpan 5, Demusmin 5, Cabagnot 5, Banaga 1, Ilani 0

Quarters: 19-19, 32-32, 52-53, 82-88

# Pacquiao-Mayweather still uncertain

Question: Who has the most MVP awards?

Burlington

Answer: Byron 'El Pinoy' Fernandez and Alex 'The Diplo' Reyneros with 4 each

A MANNY PACQUIAO VERSUS Floyd Mayweather Jr bout is the fight everyone wants to see.

But Pacquiao trainer Freddie Roach says nothing is certain at this point, not even the supposed agreement with Puerto Rican Miguel Cotto on a catch-weight limit of 144, as revealed last week by the Filipino champion's adviser Michael Koncz.

"In the end, it would still be Manny's decision and I will help him decide," said Roach in a radio interview with www.fanhouse.com. "Michael Koncz doesn't know about styles, he's an outsider in boxing, he has no idea about styles."

What is certain, added Roach, is that Pacquiao will get more than Mayweather if and when they meet.

"50-50? No way," said Roach during the same interview. "Manny is very bigger than Floyd. It's not me will not agree to a split."

Cotto, who is also under the wing of Top Rank's Bob Arum, isn't saying anything either about a possible clash with Pacquiao.

In a conference call with reporters yesterday, the 28-year-old WBO welterweight champion didn't answer questions on whether he's amenable to fighting the five-division Filipino champion instead, he said he is preparing for Joshua Clottey (the former IBF welterweight champion from Ghana).

"As soon as a very strong opponent for Pacquiao," was all Cotto told www.newsday.com about Pacquiao, referring to his second round knockout of Miguel Ricky Hatton on May 2.

Pacquiao is slated to receive his Fighter of Year for 2008 from the Boxing Writers Association of America (BWAA) on June 12.

Roach, on the other hand, will get the Trainer of the Year award during the BWAA's 66th annual dinner.

Other awardees are Joe Gallagher as Best Manager and Steve Farhood, Showtime boxing analyst who will take home the Long and Mortensen Service award. Roseline E. Ravilla

EQUAL by Pharex cousin Carlo Tan's symbolism, it's going to be another knotting encounter between Pharex and Oracle in Game 3.

# Pharex, Oracle break finals tie; Ross is MVP

By Cedell P. Tupas

PHAREX TIES TO EQUIND in impressive fore today when the Bulong Grocers and the Oracle Bookstore Titans break their tie in Game 3 of the best-of-five PBL OG Flex Duty Cup title series at the Pasay Sports Arena in Pasay City.

The Bulong Grocers scored a convincing 81-72 victory in Game 2 Thursday after the Titans, who are gunning for a seventh straight crown, won the opener, 79-73.

Game time is set at 3 p.m. shortly after Pharex guard Chris Ross receives the Most Valuable Player award for the season.

Ross' performance, in return, has dictated Pharex's fortunes in the series. Sealing the ill-effects of a flu, the 6-foot-3 guard out of Marshall University struggled in the Game 1 loss with just eight points. But he bounced back with a stellar all-around effort of 11 points, nine rebounds and eight assists to power Pharex, which is in search of its first league crown, to victory.

If Game 2, which featured seven technical fouls, was a preview of things to come, smash- or bruising encounter is expected today.

"It's going to be brutal just like this game," said Pharex coach Carlo Tan after winning Game 2. "We're prepared for it."

Oracle coach Glenn Capacio said continue to train the 3P front quarter of Mark Isaacson, Mithch Hamers, Mac Baracael and JR Castelo.

The Titans gasped for him early on and to overwhelmed without Barroca in Game 2.

"He told the boys to forget about Game 2 and just stay focused in winning Game 3," said Serjoks. "We have the legacy to protect."

Bench scoring was also a key factor for Pharex in Game 2 with the Bulong Grocers receiving key contributions, a 28-point improvement from Game 1.

While Asi Salubaga and Ronnie Matias have been steady in the series, Don Villamin and Joshua Urbiztondo surprised the Titans in Game 2 by combining for 20 points.

Oracle's Rico Maierhofer, who scored six points and grabbed a game-high 18 rebounds in Game 2, and Jeremy Gaco will spearhead the Titans' bid, along with Chris Timberlake.

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# Palanca nails US Kids' Euro title

A GRAND WELCOME AWAITS GAB-bin Philippe Wilmer-Balanza today after the seven-year-old became the first Filipino champion of the US Kids Golf European Championship by barking 33 players from 12 countries in Kilspindie, Scotland, on Thursday.

Palanca, who led from start to finish, fired rounds of 32-34–37 for a 104 aggregate, prevailing by one stroke over Rian Luke Rose of South Africa and John Craddock of Britain in the boys' 7-and-under event.

He arrives this morning via KLM.

Junior Golf Foundation of the Philippines chair Dory Harding said they are preparing a big welcome for the champion, a grandson of open titlist Mickey Boy Palanca.

"This is a big victory for Jungoli and it is important for us since we are all preparing for several big tournaments in the coming months," said Harding.

Palanca's win follows the runner-up finish of Miguel Tabuena in the boys' 13-14 group of the 30th Asia-Pacific Junior golf championships in Thailand.

Tabuena and Thai lee Natanon Wharnsatchon tied at 209-over 200 but the latter prevailed in the playoff after carding a 72 as against the Filipino's 75.

Palanca will also compete in the Philippine qualifier for the US Kids World Championship meeting on Monday at the Orchard in Dasmariñas, Cavite. The US event is slated on Aug. 8 to 8 in Pinehurst, North Carolina.

PHILIPPE Winner Palanca arrives today

# Orillana key to Dolphins' vital match

By Marc Anthony Reyes

CEBU AND DUMAguete are out to topple Bacolod respectively in the playoffs when they square off today in the lone senior game of the Maxybell Philippines Series 5 at 4:30rd Elementary ballpark.

The Dolphins, champions in the Series 2 and Series 4 tournament, hope to stay in touch with second-running Manila and get a crack at the unbeaten semifinals slot.

At 4-4 Cebu can still dislodge idle Manila in the No. 2 spot behind leader Batangas, which swept the eliminations with a 10-0 card.

The Dolphins and the Sharks are scheduled to resume their suspended game early in the afternoon, which ended at 9-9, tomorrow.

The top two teams after eliminations go outright to the semifinals, while the two drag it out for the last two spots. No. 3 and No. 4 teams gain entry to four knock-out for the last two seats in the quarterfinals.

Cebu's chances rests heavily on ace pitcher Jason Cardenas, who turned their last two games in sympathy with fellow national players who are said to be boycotting the games.

The national players felt slighted by cash rates they reportedly received from BF organizers over their poor level of play.

If the boycott persists today, Dumaguete will have the edge because its team manager Lito Pulgo and assistant coach manager Emily Cabahug can pitch in the absence of ace Darwin Jake Cabada.

More: Anthony Reyes

# Chang crushes De Luna

## 7 Filipinos still battling giants; Manalo faces Korean

By Cedrik F. Reyes

GENESIS-SIMPLE ACE CHANG PHIwel crushed top Filipino hope Jeff De Luna, 8-2, yesterday and became the first player to advance to the last eight of the winners' bracket in the Philippine Open 10-Ball Pool Championships at the SM Megamall Megatrade Hall 2 in Mandaluyong City.

Chang, losing finalist to Alex Pagulayan in the 2004 World Pool Championship, encountered token resistance from De Luna, who struggled on his break.

Chang will face the winner of the match between Japan's Satoshi Kinetsu and Indonesia's Ricky Yang in the semifinal.

De Luna fell to the losers' bracket, where he faced himself up for a possible collision with World No. 1 Ralf Souquet of Germany, who was pushed to the brink of elimination after beating to unheralded Filipino Mario Valentino on Thursday.

Seven other Filipinos remain in the title hunt and the $30,000 purse, including Dylan Arias Gomez, gold medalist Antonio Gabica, who won to play Marcus Chamat of Sweden for a place in the round of 8 of the winners' bracket last night.

Valentino and Deonisio-one Pulgar were also scheduled to battle for a place in the round.

Facing by a 7-9 defeat to Rudi Ramos Thursday, Marlon Manalo began his run from the losers' bracket with a 9-7 decision over Kim Hee-sup.

Manalo perhaps the country's biggest hope in the tournament is the absence of brilliant stars Pagulayan, Efren "Bata" Reyes, Ronnie Alcano, Dennis Orcollo, Francisco "Django" Bustamante, Warren Kiamco, among others, will clash with another Korean, Jeong Young-hwa, in the next round.

Pagulayan, Reyes and the others gave the tournament a rule because of differences with its local organizer, Alcano, Orcollo and Kiamco were invited as opposite by the World Pool Association but opted to support the stand of their managers, who are part of a rival national pool group.

Junior Al Omega, a late-entrant replacement to Filipino ace Mike Sweeney, edged Japan's Naoyuki Oi, 9-8, to arrange a duel with Russian Ruslan Chinakhov, who beat German Thorsten Hohmann packing from the tournament with a 9-8 upset.

In a pair of All-Filipino elimination matches, Oliver Villahermosa ousted Rusty Lidanilla, 9-3, and Allan Quarino humbled our Jomrod Magadia, 9-6.

Villahermosa earned the right to face Singapore's Chan Kwong, who eliminated Leonardo Dalid with a 9-8 win, while Quarino faces Indian Ishu Bansal in the next round.

Statistician Marilu Enriquez showed the door to Gina Cabanong, 5-8.

Also keeping their hide alive were reigning World 10-ball titlist Dennis Agbayani of Britain, who bested Japan's Hiyuto Hifikata, 9-6, and world junior champion Ko Pin-yi, who beat Oi, 9-3.

UNWANESE standout Peiwei Iona his shot against jeffrey De Luna in the fourth rack.

# Air Force, UP start softball title defense

PHILIPPINE AIR FORCE–PMAY and UNIVERSITY of the Philippines Kick off their 30th defense today in the Colegiate Leather National Open Softball Championships at the Rizalito Sports Complex in Pasig City and Sto. Niño subparts in Marikina City.

The defense has Antipolo as the opening game at 7 (12:30 p.m.) while Colegio Complex, MCU Fil-Lady Marikina and the rookie of MAPUAInt Alabang 2-Manila at 1 p.m. at Sto. Niño.

In other men's division games, PTU takes on Antipolo-1 at 9:30 a.m., Sagay meets Cagayan de Oro at 11:30, Cebu clashes with Mandaluyong at 1 p.m.; Dipolog battles De La Salle-Lipa at 3 p.m. and Cadiz City tests Calamba at 4 p.m.

Women's division games: Legends of Pangasinan (2) (Aspra) (8:30 a.m.), Ateneo 3-Manila vs. UP-3 (10:30 a.m.), Ateneo-2 at 12:30 p.m., UP-1 at 2:30, Ateneo-1 at 4:30 p.m. and Legends (1) (5 p.m.).

# 7 countries vying in RP Int'l jungolf

SOME 70 PLAYERS FROM SEVEN COUNtries are seeing action in the 9th Philippine Country Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) Philippine International Junior Golf Championships which kick off on June 2 at the Canlubang Golf and Country Club in Laguna.

Players from Australia, Thailand, Korea, Japan, Malaysia and special Chinese region of Hong Kong have confirmed for the tournament organized by the Philippine Junior Golf Federation.

To be disputed in the three-day stroke play competition are the championships in the boys' and girls' 16-21 aperial division, Class A (13-15), Class B (13-14), Class C (11-12) and Class D for beginners 10 years and younger.

"This will be a very exciting tournament," said PJGF president Boy Custodio. "We heard most of the foreign players coming here are winners and serious contenders in their respective countries. We wish them to have fun in their stay in our country."

The 2008 stroke Robert "Bert" Jones designed Canlubang is expected to be made more challenging for the tournament.

# Columbia riders gird for more races

DISCOURAGED BY THE CREDIBLE SHOWING OF its riders in the recent Padyak Price Tour of Champions, Columbia Sportswear has decided to retain the team's core with the hope of not only continuing their performance but also making it more consistent competitors.

"We believe that these riders embody the ideals and image of what Columbia stands for as a leading quality outdoor and sportswear company," Jimmy Tan, president of Prime Group of Companies, exclusive local Columbia distributors, said at the team's presentation held at the mall's outdoor gear store at The Fort in Taguig City.

Disappointed by unfavorable mechanical breakdowns in the 2009 Tour Philippines, the Columbia cyclists finished fourth overall in the eight-day classical.

## Makati Court scores winner for RP pool

IT'S NOT THE LEGENDARY EFREN "BATA" REYES capping the PAGCOR Pool Championship again. In fact, there may never be another victory of that magnitude which took place in Cardiff, Wales, in July 1999.

But if you haven't heard of it yet, the latest ruling by the Makati Regional Trial Court, aimed at removing cuetes in the classic national pool series, could ultimately ordained into a championship apt enough for all those who honestly care for the game of billiards here.

In a decision handed down Wednesday, the Makati RTC Branch 60, under presiding Judge Jaime C. Villacorta, granted a petition for a temporary restraining order to enjoin the group of Arturo Pacot and Arturo Ragos from acting as directors and officers of the Billiards and Snooker Congress of the Philippines (BSCP).

But the reward, this group took over the BCSP through an arbitrary ruling by the Philippine Olympic Committee, headed by the redoubtable president, Jose "Peping" Cojuangco.

When your reporter here called up the POC spokesman, Joey Romasanta, he said he could not comment on the case, it being an intra-corporate dispute. It rejected the claim of the Philippine Olympic Committee through its counsel that it has absolute jurisdiction over national sports associations (NSAs) in the country.

"[..] The March 21, 2009 election called by the Bagtas-Pacot group did not comply with the POC directive that the owners' list to the said BSCP election be used. It used instead a 2008 owners list when in fact the last election had been held in 2006. The substitution of lists was designed to manufacture an artificial majority for the group in the election.

"[..] The March 21 election prejudiced the rights of plaintiffs Maladones and Sajardo to vote and be voted upon to a proper election of BSCP officers."

[...]

Anyway, it will be an understatement to say that billiards in the country has suffered from the confusion and chaos caused by the leadership dispute that once aggravated by the irregular self-centered POC intervention.

With an order, the court declared: that "by virtue of the lockdown principle and in order not to disrupt the day-to-day activities of the BSCP, the previous set of officers shall continue to hold office until the final disposition of the instant case."

[...]

The ruling is currently shaping the world-class Philippine Open at the Megamall in Mandaluyong.

"In my 1999 decision, the Makati RTC pointedly observed that the POC has not established its observance of elections and the rules and procedures for the arbitration of disputes," Maladones said.

Whatever these mumbling actions, the POC leadership has no business constituting "arbitration proceedings," Maladones added.

Meanwhile, Judge Villacorta has called for the hearing of the petition for preliminary injunction to be set on June 9, 2009 at 8:30 a.m.

This correspondent will be there to report on developments, regardless of who gets upheld or overruled.

# PAF, Cebu rule beach football

PHILIPPINE AIR FORCE AND HOST SAN Remigio of Cebu shared the limelight after ending their respective divisions in the 9th National Beach Football Championships in San Remigio, Cebu, recently.

National team veterans Jan Acuneta scored twice as Air Force bucked the absence of skipper Emelio Caligdong to nip Army 2-1, in the men's division.

Acuneta denied home the opener in the 20s minute, before doubling the lead six minutes later.

Jan Remigio bested teams from Cebu City, Bacolod City and San Carlos City to emerge champion of the women's division of the fifth-leg 9 to 11 tournament sponsored by the Philippine Sports Commission and organized by the Beach Football Association of the Philippines, headed by Mike Albali.

The tournament, which was also backed by Smart Sports, the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor) and the University of the Philippines Alumni, will serve as the basis for the selection of the RP team that will join the Asian qualifying tournament for the Beach Football World Cup late this year.

"Our target is making the World Cup," said Albali, noting that the Philippines ranks 45th in the world, ahead of European football heavyweights Germany, England and Netherlands.

"Our second shows we can be world-class beach football players," Albali said.

"We should join regular international events so we could succeed in our efforts to upgrade beach soccer as a sport in the country," said Ben Mills, BFAP secretary general.

Cedrik F. Reyes

# Firefly entry closes big NCA season with a bang

THE FIREFLY ENTRY OF RAZ Ilustrisimo Acosta and Pingoy AGR-E July 5.6 cock of Tarlac Gov. Victor Yap-Bobon Macas emerged co-champions of the show of the National Cockers Alliance's (NCA) season last on Thursday.

Both winners amassed 3 points in the NCA's "Big Event" which was participated in by the wheels who in Philippine cockfighting.

Erwin Z.U.U. by Elmer Nepomuceno, Tata Dora Boy Santos by Mayor Ellan Nagarlet and Jose Soriano and Pinoy Anniversary July 13.17 by Eric dela Rosa were runners-up with 4 points each.

Garnering 3½ points were Jade Hawaii by Ramon Sanchez and JT Bautista by Jun Tupaczka while Blue Ilustrisimo, owned by the nation of Raul Rondaza, Boy Bhasa, Danny Tevez, Ito Tevez, Rebel Ty, another entry by Yap and Jun Mendoza, J. Palmares and Patrick "Kiko" Antonio.

The NCA ended its season with additional funds for its scholarship program as who are enrolled at the University of the Philippines Los Baños taking up Veterinary Science and Agricultural Economics major in Poultry Science.

# DLSU Archers, Squires reach FCBL finals

PERPETUAL Help's Michael Sloan (left) shoots off San Sebastian's Gilbert Bulawan in yesterday's fourth-quarter game. The Stags prevailed.

# Bombers end Warriors run

# Laylo downs Viet, closes in on Subic leaders

LAYLO: Third win in six games.

# Volleyball the ultimate beneficiary

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SPORTS

# LeBron keeps Cavaliers alive

CLEVELAND, OHIO—LEBRON JAMES PUT on a virtuoso performance in the fourth quarter to rally the Cleveland Cavaliers to a 112-102 win over the Orlando Magic on Thursday as the Eastern Conference top seeds stayed off eliminations.

James rallied 17 of his 37 points in the final period and rounded off a smashing triple-double with 14 rebounds and 12 assists to pull the Cavs back to 3-2 in the best-of-seven conference finals series.

"It's not over yet, home," the league MVP told reporters after he had scored or assisted on 32 straight points for the home team.

"It was a big game for us. You never want to disappoint the home crowd by not playing as hard as you can.

"We have to play the same way (in Game Six in Orlando on Saturday) that we did today."

Hedo Turkoglu had 29 points and Dwight Howard added 24 and 16 rebounds for the Magic, who led 90-89 midway through the fourth before Cleveland used a 13-3 spurt to open a 107-96 lead with 1:47 remaining.

Cavaliers guard Mo Williams chipped in with 24 points to give James the help he needed, while Zydrunas Ilgauskas added 16 and reserve Daniel Gibson drained a pair of key three-pointers in the fourth as part of his 11-point haul.

James, who has topped the 40-point mark in all three of his team's losses, made a concerted effort to involve his teammates early on but decided it was time to take over in the final quarter.

"As you know, we didn't do anything pretty, we just gave (Antawn) the ball and told 'get on some good looks,'" Cleveland coach Mike Brown said.

"LeBron was huge for us. He had a heck of a game.... that is when great players do."

As they have for much of the series, Orlando fell behind early on and trailed 34-12 with two minutes left in the first quarter.

However, Howard added 11 points in the second as the Magic pulled to within a point of the Cavaliers by halftime with a 53-52 surge.

"The way we started the first and second quarter is unacceptable," Orlando guard Michael Pietrus said. "Hopefully we can now it around and win on Saturday. We're still up, there is no rush."

The Magic are trying to reach the NBA Finals for the first time since 1995, while the Cavaliers are trying to become the sixth team in NBA history to win a playoff series after trailing 3-1.

Reuters

CLEVELAND superstar LeBron James (top) soars over Dwight Howard and the rest of the Orlando Magic.

# Federer survives Acasuso challenge

PARIS—ROGER FEDERER FOUND HIMSELF in a tougher match than he would have expected in the French Open's second round in beating Jose Acasuso of Argentina, 7-6 (8), 5-7, 7-5 (1), 6-2, on Thursday.

"How sure did the 45th-ranked Acasuso come to shelling upset—in straight sets, no less? On four occasions, the Argentine won a point from taking the first set. After winning the second, he held a set point in the third.

Nobody who saw anyone hasn't been up to his high standards, was up to the task each time, though.

"Obviously, I've always been very strong, but I'm not being put in a position like that very often, you know," Federer said. Then, moreover later, as if to make sure everyone understood him, Federer added: "Coming through such a match is always a great feeling. Like I said, I'm not part of such close matches that often."

Particularly at this stage of a Grand Slam tournament. And particularly against anyone other than Rafael Nadal, who supplanted Federer as No. 1 in the rankings last year and edged him in five-set Wimbledon and marathon Open finals.

"I thought," Acasuso said, "I could have won this match."

Federer allowed this assessment of his performance: "I was not managing and concentrating the way I should have."

He has made the semifinals at a record 19 consecutive majors and hasn't lost before the third round at any Grand Slam since the 2003 French Open. But of Federer's 11 Grand Slam titles—one shy of Pete Sampras' career mark—wins have come at Roland Garros.

Federer reached the past three finals and the 2005 semifinals at the clay court major before losing to Nadal each time.

Venus Williams also hammered out a tight 6-7 (5-2), 7-5 win over Czech Lucie Safarova.

"I was very angry. I really wanted that tiebreaker like just came up with that ace shot, on the line, deep, hard, you know the best shots she could hit," said Williams.

AP

LAMAR Odom (left) and Pau Gasol

# Lakers 'bigs' play crucial role

LOS ANGELES—KWAME BRIEN-covered their inside game against the Nuggets to take a commanding 3-2 lead in their Western Conference finals, the Los Angeles Lakers know they need to follow suit in Friday's Game Six in Denver.

The pairs Boggets are a step difficult team to beat at home but the Lakers, with Kobe Bryant playing the role of facilitator, proved on Wednesday they can take advantage of their bigger and taller starting forwards.

Instinctively aggressive and double-teamed virtually every time he takes to the court, Bryant orchestrated the plays superbly in the final quarter as Staples Center, fresh off Pau Gasol and Lamar Odom for driving runs to the basket.

"I just had to quarterback it a little bit," Bryant told reporters after scoring 22 points on 9-for-13 shooting from the floor. "They soaked their whole defense to me so I tried to beat them with my passing a little bit.

"They've been so ready to trap and double team me all over the place so I just stretched the floor out. Pau, they double-teamed him over the post too.

"So all we did was just put the ball in my hands, put the ball in his (Gasol's) hands, make the defense scramble and then we made plays from there."

Reserve forward Odom added a lesser but key injury to record a double-double with 19 points and 14 rebounds. Spanish starting forward Gasol was not far behind with a tally of 14 and 10.

"Odom had a huge game for them," Nuggets coach George Karl said. "I thought that was the thing they hadn't gotten (earlier in the series)." Reuters

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AMONG THE WORLD'S BEST The seemingly pretty but tough opening hole of Sta. Elena Golf Club's Wedding course. Sta. Elena made it to the list of Golf Digest's Top 100 courses outside the United States for 2009-2010—the only one in the Philippines and Southeast Asia to earn the distinction. Ranked 79th in the world, this is the second time Sta. Elena made it to the list since 2005, when Golf Digest started recognizing top courses outside the US.

# Orduna bags 2nd ROK win

TOP JUNIOR JOEY ORDUNA earned back Beachy2Base teammate Ruby Bendo for a second straight ROK Junior class win on the third leg of the 2009 Magnolia Super Karting Series held recently at the Kart Zone in Cavite.

The 13-year old Orduna used the victory to retain sole lead in the ROK Overall class with 222 points against Bendo's 186.

The Grade 7 student of International School Manila is likewise ahead in the Karter of the Year race with 102 points, 11 points better than another teammate, John Tordilla.

Orduna, reigning Asian Karting ROK Junior champion, earned second behind Bendo, but a first-lap collision sent him further to ninth place. Not one to give up, the young karter fought his way back to improve to third on the 11th lap.

The big break came on the 22nd lap when Bendo spun out, paving the way for Orduna to finish first in 12 minutes and 6.083 seconds.

"After that collision, I wasn't really expecting anymore to win," said Orduna, who is set to compete in the Kirkal leg of the Asian Karting Open Championship on June 13 to 14 in Macau.

"I just gave my best and luckily, the breaks came my way."

ORDUNA

## PCSO clic: Far Eastern U turns back Ateneo beach volleybelles

THE FAR EASTERN UNIVERSITY'S TAMARAW of Anna Estrella Alcantara and Maricel Fuentes no-nay possessed Ateneo University's Shanlia Ann Jessica Macadaan a straight-set finish of the second leg of the PCSO Women's Inter-Collegiate Beach Volleyball Challenge held Sunday at the sand court of the Carlsada Sports Center in Tagaytay City.

Eighteen teams participated in the one-day event sponsored by the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office. Lyceum Governors, Mapúa College and Adamson finished in four teams each. FEU and Letran had ten each. Ateneo University and St. Jude had one each.

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Editor Raul D. Mamalo • Deputy Editor Carrie S. Nuñeza

# BUSINESS

# BSP seen cutting rates further to boost economy

## Economists start revising '09 growth forecasts lower

By Reena V. Obrero

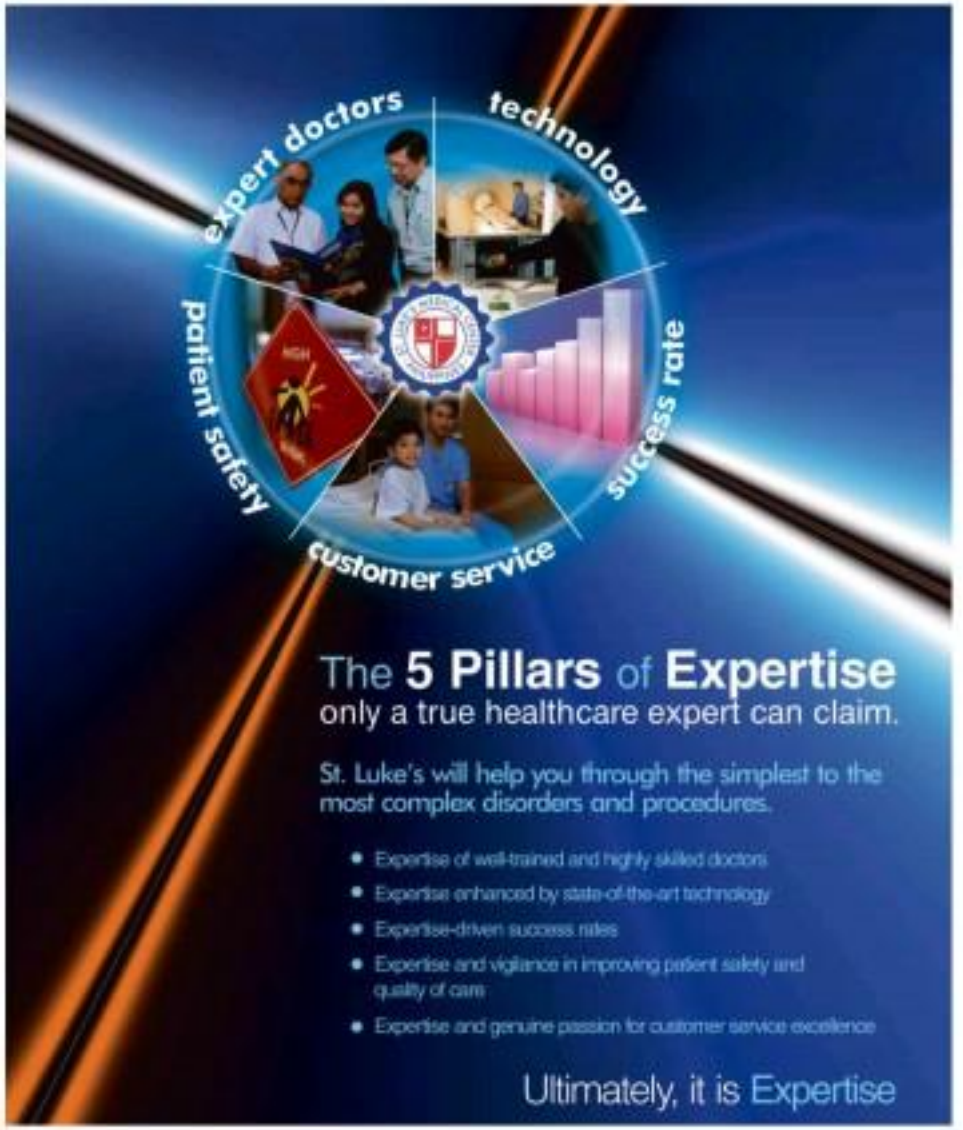
A NEW YORK-BASED THINK TANK AND A SINGAPORE-based bank said the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) is expected to continue easing its key policy rates after the Philippine economy grew far slower than expected at only 0.4 percent in the first quarter.

Global Source said the BSP was likely to cut its overnight lending and borrowing rates further following Thursday's reduction of 25 basis points.

Global Source took note that, in seasonally adjusted terms, first-quarter figures were the worst result since the country's deep recession in the mid-1980s, while beating economic indicators pointed to continued weakness.

"This emerging scenario with the economy slowing markedly calls for greater support from both monetary and fiscal policy, though monetary and fiscal management now clearly more difficult with the policy mix requiring careful evaluation," said Global Source.

BSP NEWS B2



# BDO sees net profit rising 172% to ₱5.5B in 2009

## Interest income forecast to grow 38%

By Doris C. Dumlao

TAN

BANCO DE ORO UNIBANK (BDO) sees its net profit rebounding by 172 percent to ₱5.5 billion this year on higher interests and fees earned income despite lingering uncertainties in the global economy.

The projected net profit for the year translates to a potential return on equity of about 9.3 percent, which would position Henry Sy's banking arm experts as client to double-digit levels starting next year as the bank squeezes more revenue from its large assets base organically after completing a merger with the former EPCI Bank.

"It underwent growth for loans and deposits will further boost our interest income," BDO president Nestor Tan said in a briefing at the sidelines of the bank's stockholders' meeting yesterday.

Based on the bank's projected statement of condition, its gross loan book will likely expand by 13 percent to ₱421 billion this year, while deposits will rise 23 percent to ₱582.4 billion from last year.

"We income will remain strong but trading gains will be muted due to uncertainty in the markets," he said.

Overall, BDO's net interest income this year is projected to grow 38 percent to ₱32.77 billion, taking up the slack for a the growth in non-interest income to ₱13.33 billion.

Of the projected non-interest income, fee-based earnings are seen to contribute ₱9.2 billion, or 6 percent higher year-on-year, while foreign exchange trading gains are seen reaching ₱2.5 billion, or 42 percent better than a year ago.

After edging out Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co. as the country's biggest lender in traded 2008's total asset, assets of ₱892 billion, BDO expects total resources to expand further by 15 percent to ₱900 billion by the end of this year. The bank announced the offer day the acquisition of another bank, GE Money Bank, which will add another ₱50 billion to its asset base.

GE Money has a net book value of ₱1.5 billion for the final purchase price will depend on the premium to be paid by BDO for its business franchise.

Tan said 2009 would still be a "tough" year but "opportunities for lending to credit-worthy borrowers are still present." Service businesses generating fees should also remain frequent, he noted.

A result, improved asset quality, he noted, would remain notable growth in the years ahead. He said the bank's provisioning levels adequately covered its bad exposures such as the debt paper of Pacific and Lehman Brothers.

"The financial impact from the global crisis is now fully absorbed," Tan said. "The merger is already completed and we are now looking at operating efficiencies."

"Our income may not be as impressive as compared to other banks, but the mix is better and quality is more sustainable," he said.

The projected growth in net profit this year will also mark a turnaround from last year's 47 percent decline in on profit to ₱2.28 billion.

Inviting the stockholders meeting, a proposal to increase the number of incorporation to issue more preferred shares was approved. Out of the bank's authorized capital stock of 6.5 billion, shareholders agreed to increase the allotment for preferred shares by another one billion with a par value of ₱1 each.

# SEC okays SM unit's bond issue

THE SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE Commission has approved a plan by SM Investments Corp. (SMIC), the holding group of retail tycoon Henry Sy, Jr.'s 100 group of companies, to offer up to ₱10 billion in peso-denominated retail bonds.

The offering will mark SMIC's debut in the local bond market and the first retail bond issuance within the SM group, which in the past has mostly taken the private placement route in raising funds for its listed companies.

SMIC announced yesterday that the SEC had given its nod to its proposed issuance of fixed-rate domestic retail bonds with a minimum investment ratio of ₱50,000 per transaction.

The bonds will be issued in two tranches, maturing either in five or seven years. SMIC aims to issue ₱5 billion, but with a bravery to upsize by another ₱5 billion.

The bonds will be jointly underwritten by BDO Capital and Investment Corp., ISM Capital Corp., Orion Banking Corp., Union Bank and RCBC Capital Corp., SMIC said.

Following the SEC approval of the issue, SMIC said its executives would conduct a domestic roadshow from June 1 to 3 in Manila, Davao and Cebu.

The proposed bonds obtained the highest credit rating (triple A) from Philippine Rating Services Corp., the only local credit-rating agency in the country accredited by both the Monglo Investing Philippines and the SEC.

Triple A is assigned by Philfinance to obligations that are with minimal credit risk. It is also assigned to issuing companies with an extremely strong ability to meet their financial obligations.

SMIC plans to use the proceeds of the bond issue for various expansion projects of its subsidiaries and for general corporate purposes.

*Doris C. Dumlao*

# Globe offers cheaper iPhone plans

THE PHILIPPINE GLOBE TELECOM, the official local network carrier of Apple's iPhone, has made owning the cool device affordable with the introduction of monthly plans worth ₱999 and ₱899.

Bundled with free 96GB basic and mobile internet, the new iPhone plans seek to give consumers the flexibility to choose how they want to avail themselves of the low-cable Internet with time-based charging in hours, or with kilobyte (kb)-based charging. Globe announced in a statement yesterday.

The iPhone 3G has redefined what a mobile phone can do by combining three products in one—a phone, a touchscreen iPod, and an Internet device with HTML email and a desktop web browser. But because of the high retail price of the iPhone, which costs more than a brand-new notebook, it was previously not accessible to a broader market in the Philippines.

The 16-GB iPhone carries a local retail price of ₱43,799 and the 8-GB variant has a pricing of ₱37,999.

Subscribers to the new Globe plans will still have to pay for the iPhone units but at a discount to retail price.

Under plan 999, there will still be a cash out of ₱12,500 to get the 8-GB iPhone and ₱18,450 for the 16-GB iPhone.

Under plan 899, there will be a cash out of ₱16,700 for the 8-GB iPhone and ₱21,650 for the 16-GB unit.

The iPhone plans were previously available only for monthly plans worth at least ₱1,599. They were then only with plans worth at least ₱3,999.

Time-based charging is recommended for most subscribers who surf or use applications that connect to the Internet. It is especially useful when accessing multimedia-heavy sites like YouTube or when uploading or downloading photos.

On the other hand, Globe has disclosed that kilobyte (kb)-based charging is recommended for subscribers who plan to have their emails and location settings continuously synced on for email, instant messaging and other applications like Web feeds.

iPhone Plan subscribers can now get their iPhone 3G at lower rates or even for free, depending on the Globe plan.

Customers can get the iPhone 3G with 20 hours or 100 MB of free mobile Internet when subscribed to iPhone Plan 799, equivalent to about 900 emails and 200 web pages browsed a month.

Meanwhile, iPhone Plan 699 comes with 10 hours or 250 MB of free mobile Internet which translates to about 2,250 e-mails and 500 web pages browsed a month.

*Doris C. Dumlao*

# BSP seen cutting rates...

(Turn to page B2)

to a paper written by Filipino economists Ramon Bernardo and Margarita Gonzales.

At the same time, UBS Bank said it maintained its view for one more 25-basis-point rate cut at the next meeting of the Monetary Board, the policymaking body of the BSP, on July 9.

UBS Bank said it also expected the government to announce a downgrade of its GDP growth forecast of 3.1-4.1 percent for 2009.

"Government officials indicated that they would shift the 2009 growth forecast to the lower end (3.1 percent)," the bank said. "However achieving that kind of growth would require the economy to sustain sequential expansion of some 3 percent quarter-on-quarter for the remaining three quarters—an implausible scenario."

Both Global Source and UBS Bank said they were downscaling their 2009 growth forecast for the Philippines, stating their current projection of 2.5 percent was "no longer viable."

Seasonally adjusted, the country's GDP from January to March contracted 2.3 percent compared to the previous three months.

"Given the developments, our full-year growth forecast of 2.5 percent, which we had expected to be beginning of the year, no longer appears to be viable and we are inclined to undertake downward revisions in our subsequent reports," Global Source said.

UBS think and there would be no recession for the Philippines but that GDP growth for 2009 would be 0.5 percent, with the remaining quarters expanding a modest yet albeit adjusted 1.2 percent.

"We [don't] think Philippine GDP will contract again in the second quarter[, though we will be watching consumer spending indicators very closely in the coming months," the bank said.

A continuously occupied deflation of an economic recession is a decrease in GDP sequentially adjusted and computing previous quarters, for at least two consecutive quarters.

# Stocks rise on economic optimism

SHARE INDICES CLOSED 1.48 percent higher yesterday amid optimism that the worst of the global financial crisis may be over, analysts said.

The composite index rose 24.84 points to 2,289.31, while the all-shares index gained 2.48 percent to 1,387.87.

There were 76 gainers, 36 losers and 48 unchanged.

Turnover amounted to 4.44 billion shares worth ₱1.98 billion.

The local currency traded at 47.30 to the dollar in the morning, from 47.46 at the close of trading on the previous day.

The rise in the market came despite the government's announcement on Thursday that the economy grew by a disappointing 0.4 percent in the first quarter of the year.

The rebound at the exchange "might be due to the fact that the bad news has already been priced in," said April Lee Tan of Chinkerfinn com. AFP

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE
As of May 29, 2009

FX INTERBANK
May 29, 2009

# Now, it's GSIS vs IBM

BREAKTIME

*Conrado R. Bawagan III*

THE FEISTY GSIS HEAD WINSTON Garcia, who challenged such powerful business giants as Henry Sy's SM group and barely-shy Lopez family, is facing a tough fight this time against US company IBM.

Reports said that GSIS was readying a string of court cases against IBM, supplier of the GSIS computer system called "IBM DB2."

Two months ago, the IBM computer system crashed, causing delays in the services to some 1.5 million members.

The problem hindered the processing of claims and benefits of GSIS members, including pensioners.

Worse, the computer glitches created problems in the posting of payments of members to the pension fund.

And we all know that, to a money institution like the GSIS, the most important part of operations is the collection.

So I said, this is going to be a big fight for Garcia and GSIS, and it may well last even after Garcia's term.

IBM is not an American corporate giant for nothing. It has always been the best lawyers in this country.

Already, GSIS wrote demand letters to IBM president and chief operating officer Samuel J. Palmisano, all the way to the IBM headquarters in New York.

From what I heard, nothing happened.

* * *

STARTING in 2008, the IBM software running the GSIS computer system was already creating a big mess. It could not handle voluminous data. And GSIS had plenty of those.

When the GSIS system eventually crashed, two local affiliates of IBM—Quantrasoft and SAP—went on record to criticize the IBM system and the indifference shown by the US firm toward the GSIS problem.

GSIS techies feared the possible paralysis of the fund's major operations. Sure enough, members flooded GSIS with complaints about the slowdown in the processing of claims and loans.

We, for about two years before the system crashed, IBM knew it had problems in the GSIS software.

Even the IBM Labs' genius in Taiwan, Canada advised that the IBM software was causing glitches to the GSIS system.

IBM local representatives in Manila did not bother to check on the GSIS problems and to allow smaller services.

According to insiders, IBM Philippines simply uploaded some software to the DB2 in the GSIS system.

That did not solve anything.

In sum GSIS is hiring other companies to solve the problem. In the works are plans to move to different software. This will take months.

Thus, GSIS has no choice but to file court cases against IBM, even if those cases may take an eternity to resolve.

Still, if IBM can calm the operations of its biggest client in this country, and then just leave it at that, heaven help its ordinary consumers like you and me.

* * *

WORD IS going around at the Subic Free port that some 250 employees of the hotel called Legenda from the Isle of Dare joke.

In trying to clean up its finances, SBMA is moving to take control of the hotel, allegedly because of rental "defaults."

Owned and operated by a firm called Legenda International Resorts Ltd., the hotel is said to owe SBMA some P900 million in rental payments.

The hotel claimed it was in financial distress.

SBMA also took over operations of Subic Bay Golf and Country Club, from Universal International Group Development Corp., a Taiwanese company that leased the golf course from SBMA.

Of all the golf courses in this country, Sta. Elena Golf Club has earned the most number of awards.

Thus, it was only expected that Sta. Elena, again, should get in the Golf Digest's Top 100 Courses outside the United States this year.

The last time Sta. Elena made it to the prestigious list was four years ago.

And the lists was also not that surprising to Rico Ilarmo (remember the Ilarmo's prompt?), who is president of Sta. Elena Properties, developer of the golf course.

Ilarmo told us that Sta. Elena has been developing other golf courses in the country, such as the upscale The Country Club.

Other golf clubs, such as the Mimosa Golf course in Mandaluyong and the Orchard in Cavite, also hired Sta. Elena to maintain the fairways.

The latest project of Sta. Elena Properties is the Thunderbird Golf Club in Palm Beach in Lal-lo, Cagayan.

Sta. Elena is mighty proud of this particular project, Tawagan said.

Presumably, the company's good reputation in golf course development and management will help enhance its real estate project.

Sta. Elena Properties still has more than 100 hectares of sea land easts to award-winning golf course.

And between us girls, those are up for development soon.

# RP banks have ample funds, BSP tells critics

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS said it should not be blamed for the economy's measly performance in the first quarter, growing by only 0.4 percent, stressing that the central bank has ensured that the banking system since it started implementing vital policies in 2008.

But a ranking BSP official said that monetary policy alone would not be sufficient to spur growth of an economy. Even if the banking sector were awash in cash, he said, this would not help stimulate the economy if the financial institutions were not willing to lend or if businesses' demand for credit were weak.

The official added that policies of the BSP must be complemented with robust government spending to really pump-prime the economy.

Government spending in the first quarter was lower than programmed, according to Julia Cortes, Budget secretary. The government spent P393 billion in the three-month period, short of the supposed ceiling of P464.9 billion.

"Why should it [economic slowdown] be placed down on monetary policy? It will be unfair to ask it so. [BSP] think the economy grew slowly because we did not raise money," the budget secretary said. "Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo also told reporters who asked if the economy would have fared better had the BSP reduced its key policy rates by a bigger margin in the past months.

The economy, measured in terms of gross domestic product, posted an annual growth of only 0.4 percent in the first quarter, the slowest in 10 years. The growth was pulled down largely by a slump in exports.

Critics, including economists from the government and private sector, said the BSP should have been more aggressive in cutting its key rates. Although the BSP has trimmed the rates by a total of 175 basis points since December, the move pales in comparison with the cuts done in other countries.

Just the other day, the BSP slashed by another 25 basis points its overnight borrowing and lending rates to 4.25 and 6.25 percent, respectively.

But Guinigundo maintains that "we have ample supply of liquidity in the market."

*Michelle V. Ramos*

# Growth of retail prices tapered in March

## NSO reports decline in prices of food, fuel, beverage

By Ronna F.W. Domingo

THE GROWTH OF RETAIL PRICES in Metro Manila slowed down in 2.5 percent year-on-year in March, the lowest in one and a half years, according to the National Statistics Office.

Based on the NSO's latest report on the general retail price index (GRPI) for the National Capital Region, the slowdown was due to decline in the prices of food, beverage and tobacco, fuels and manufactured goods.

The NSO has been monitoring the general retail price index (GRPI) since 1996. Decision-makers in the government and private sector use it to adjust the data to be critical.

The GRPI computes wholesale prices of eight groups of products in their 1978 levels.

These groups include food, beverage and tobacco; landlike crude materials except fuels; mineral fuels, lubricants and related matericals; chemicals including animal and vegetable oils and fats; manufactured goods; machinery and transport equipment; and miscellaneous manufactured articles.

Prices of food items fell by 7 percent in March from 8.2 percent in February; beverages and tobacco, 0.4 percent from 0.5 percent; fuels, 3.3 percent from 4.0 percent; and manufactured goods, 1.7 percent from 3.2 percent.

On the other hand, the rest of the commodity groups—chemicals, machinery and transport equipment and miscellaneous manufactured items—recorded higher annual growth rates.

On a monthly basis, the GRPI in NCR increased barely by 0.1 percent in March from -0.1 percent in February.

The NSO attributed this reality on the increase in the prices of basic, dry unrefined food items at (1.2 percent) in March from -0.4 percent in February.

Also, month-on-month price increases were observed in crude materials at 0.1 percent in March from no growth in February; chemicals and vegetable oils and fats, 1.2 percent from 0.5 percent; manufactured goods, 0.4 percent from 0.2 percent; and miscellaneous manufactured articles, 0.08 percent from 0 percent.

The growth in prices of beverages and tobacco remained at 0.8 percent in March as in the previous month.

The price growth index of mineral fuels, lubricants and related materials posted a negative rate of -2.8 percent from 1.6 percent.

"Price of foodstuff such as rice, vegetables, coffee, cheese and butter were on the uptrend," the NSO said.

Sold-ons were observed in medicinal and pharmaceutical products. Price hikes were also noted in gravel, sand, selected lumber, plywood, cement, hollow blocks, GI sheets, electrical wires and fixtures under of rubber plastic."

# Petron raises ₱10 billion from bond issue

PETRON CORP., THE COUNTRY'S biggest oil refiner and retailer, yesterday said it successfully raised P10 billion from a bond issue, up from the original amount of P5 billion, due to strong demand from banks.

In a statement, Petron said proceeds from the issue of fixed-rate peso bonds will help fund planned expansion projects for the year, particularly the building up of the company's petrochemical operations.

The issue, one of the largest corporate coin issuances in the history of local debt capital markets, was more than three times oversubscribed and was priced at 8.139 percent for the five-year issue and 9.329 percent for the seven-year issue.

The facility was priced 200 basis points over the applicable benchmark rate, the lowest end of the company's pricing guide, it added.

"The strong and positive response to our notes issue reflects the trust and confidence of the investment community in the viability and profitability of Petron over the long-term. It likewise underscores the company's solid fundamentals, undisputed market leadership in the country and efficient distribution network and numerous synergies with San Miguel," Petron president Eric G. Recto said.

Given the increase in the issue size, Recto said it would no longer pursue its initial plan to issue retail bonds.

Funds will be used to pursue projects aimed at improving the retail network expansion program and additional improvements at its 180,000 barrel-per-day Bataan refinery.

"The expansion program aims to further enhance customer convenience and ensure the company's market dominance, at the heart of this program is the construction of petroleum retail stations that can start with 2-3 product pumps but easily expandable as demand grows," Recto added.

Another project is the construction of additional refinery units, including a second Fluid Catalytic Cracking Unit (Fcc-II). It also will enable the full conversion of residual products to more valuable gasoline, diesel, LPG and propylene.

The bond issue was jointly arranged by BPI Capital Corp. and ING Bank NV, Manila branch as joint issue managers, with Development Bank of the Philippines and The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corp. Ltd. as joint lead managers.

"We wish to thank our partners in this undertaking who demonstrated savvy and a deep appreciation of the market despite a volatile business environment," Petron said. *Amy R. Remo*

# RP debt burden seen to weigh down economy

By Michelle V. Ramos

HITCH RATINGS SAID THAT THE GOVERNment's high debt burden, along with possible inflationary pressures, could weigh down the fiscal and monetary policies of the government and affect the country's growth.

As a result, the credit-rating agency said, the economy would likely post virtually zero growth for the entire 2009 and fail to recover from the measly 0.4 percent annual growth in the first quarter. Fitch sees the economy growing by only 0.1 percent this year.

"The first quarter GDP (gross domestic product) data confirm that, notwithstanding the fact that countries closer have held up reasonably well so far, the Philippine economy has not escaped the global downturn," James McCormack, head of Asia sovereigns for Fitch, told the bureau.

Fitch said the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, which cut policy rates by another 25 basis points last Thursday, could still be prompted to reduce rates in the coming months given the disappointing performance of the economy in January to March. However, it said, BSP could not be as aggressive as it should.

"From a policy perspective, we (Fitch) have assessed interest rates could be brought lower, but not by much, as there are limits to policy rate reductions given the level of inflation," McCormack said.

The cut in the BSP's overnight borrowing and lending rates—currently now stood at 4.25 and 6.25 percent—was meant to encourage banks to lend more, more and for businesses to borrow and fund investment activities. In slashing policy rates, the BSP considers the possible effects on consumer prices, mindful that the lower rates must not result in a breach of inflation target.

BSP officials said inflation was still benign and was expected to fall within the official targets for 2009 and 2010. Yet, they admitted that there could be risks. These include volatile oil prices and foreign-exchange movement.

Inflation targets were set at 3.5 to 5.5 percent for this year, and at 3.5 to 5.5 percent for next year.

On the fiscal front, Fitch said the Philippine government also does not have enough flexibility to shore up spending to a level necessary to achieve its economic growth target for the year, set at between 3.1 and 4.1 percent. Fitch said the government debt, at nearly 54 trillion, was still high and a downturn in economic activity could lead to a worrisome fiscal condition.

# PSALM sells Aplaya, General Santos plants for $1.48M

POWER SECTOR ASSETS AND LIABILities Management Corp. has sold the 108-megawatt (MW) Aplaya and 22.3-MW General Santos diesel power plants for $1.486 million.

The decommissioned power plants were sold last Monday to a package to local firm TSC Industries Inc.

A Cebu-based company that started operations in 1984, TSC has interests in heavier manufacturing and exports. The company, however, diversified into trading surplus materials with the shredding of the furniture market.

PSALM said in a statement that TSC was the lone qualified bidder for the plants although its original bid of $700,000 did not meet the government's reserve price.

After declaring the second round of bidding a failure, the PSALM board authorized the corporation to negotiate with the qualified bidder in accordance with negotiation procedures.

Under the rules, the state-run firm can negotiate with interested parties after two failed auctions.

The reserve price of $1.486 million was then disclosed to TSC, which agreed to match it.

According to PSALM, TSC must submit to the company a bid security reflecting the increase in TSC's offer.

The Transfer of Asset Ownership TSC as the new owner of the decommissioned Aplaya Diesilan power plants will be issued after PSALM validates TSC's submitted documents," PSALM said.

Including the Aplaya-General Santos facilities, PSALM has sold four decommissioned assets this year. It said through a negotiated sale the 54-MW Cebu II diesel and the 220-MW Bataan thermal power plants on Jan. 22 and April 15, 2009, respectively.

PSALM's first successful sale of mothballed power assets involved the 200-MW Manila thermal power plant, which was sold on April 15, 2008. *Amy R. Remo*

# Energy execs turn to Neda for help on audit of oil companies

By Amy R. Remo

THE NATIONAL ECONOMIC AND DEvelopment Authority is set to open and study the audited financial statements of all local oil companies to determine whether their petroleum products have been overpriced.

The Department of Energy moved to the Neda for help on the audit of the oil companies' books, after the Commission on Audit's audit report that the government's request, Energy Secretary Angelo T. Reyes yesterday said during a briefing.

"[COA] said it is not within their mandate to do that, so we will forward the financial statements to Neda for purposes of policy formulations and forward planning," Reyes said.

As early as March, Reyes had ordered the big oil companies, as well as independent oil producers and importers, to submit their 2008 audited financial statements and find out if the firms were "earning reasonably."

"We have again asked the oil companies to submit their audited financial statement for 2008, and as soon as these are complete, we will submit [these documents] to Neda," Reyes said.

Neda Director General Ralph Torres said this move could not be considered an added function for the government body since part of its role is to formulate energy- and oil-related plans and policies, as well.

This will be the first time, however, that Neda will probe the audited financial statements of oil companies, he added.

The Neda is now mulling over the possibility of bringing in experts to help them study the financial statements, Torres also said.

"We will take a look at the resource we have in Neda. We may ... require more people," he said.

Meanwhile, Neda, DOE, and the oil companies are still at odds on claims that local petroleum products are overpriced by as much as P8 a liter.

"Naturally we don't expect to come into an agreement in our first meeting, that's why it's necessary to have a continuing dialogue. The oil companies during their price presentation, I think our interpretations are reasonable ... are still convince to talk," Torres explained.

"Our goal is to have a good balance between having a sustained industry and protecting the consumer," he added.

Reyes described yesterday's meeting to be "fruitful," adding that the two government bodies have agreed to hold continuous dialogue until all issues—particularly those regarding oil pricing and supply—have been threshed out.

"While we protect the public, we have to ensure also that the industries have reasonable returns, not excessive profits. We are all against excessive profits and we will continue to monitor," Reyes added.

# SCIENCE/HEALTH

Editor Cesar D. Mangosong

# Positive thoughts key to bowling, Paeng says

PAENG'S tip for thought: Sports, particularly bowling, is a mental game. If you feel discouraged, nervous, panicked or distressed by people, you failed to work all of those [out] of you[r] system.

By Tessa R. Salazar

IT TAKES JUST AROUND TWO to three seconds for a bowling ball to leave a bowler's hands and reach the pins 59 feet away. It is then spin of many spectators see, and either cheer or scream in agony about.

The bigger battle, the one site of a bowler's throw, actually happens in his or her mind before that fast step to the throw happens.

"If you dominant thought is negative, the outcome would be negative," an time would bowling champion and three-time Sumazon World Bowler Jubilee Rafael "Paeng" Nepomuceno told business meets.

Mentally strong, more than the physical one, actually helped one of the sport's greatest (2 are the greatest) athlete achieve his status. Nepomuceno, who operates a monitoring system to "unlock all negative thoughts and replace them with positive thought right away," conducts mind-raising sessions for specific and bowling players. These techniques include concentration, visualization, imagery affirmation and exercises.

Nepomuceno, who held on April 14 presence at the Manila business office in Mabini City as part of the social athlete endorsers of Team Starlife, talked to the press a day before he flew to England to compete in the World Tenpin Masters April 18 to 24.

For continuously bowling and certifying, Nepomuceno said he would be there years (and counting). Nepomuceno, 52, recently received the Silver Lane Jr Medal, granted bowler in Bromley, England here the World Bowling Writers—an international association of Tenpin Bowling journalists, PR practitioners, industry leaders and bowling federation officials.

WBWI is composed of members from 100 countries.

PHILSPORTS CHECKING (Also) to be the healthiest, oldest world record-holder, too.

## Filipino kid bowlers

His next project with Starlife involves teaching Filipino children to bowl.

Paeng disclosed he had started the organization of Makiling Institute in the United States, which was one reason he left traditional with the nutritional supplements.

Other world athlete members of the elite are Secretary Jesse Robredo, the world's fastest man since 2008; Liu Xiang, the first Chinese athlete to win a gold medal in track and field; Sanya Richards, a Jamaican born 100 million and 2008 bronze-medal holder for the women's 400 in competition; and Ryoichi Sekiya, European Footballer of the Year in 2006.

Paeng suggests bowlers to form a "crystal clear visualization that you see yourself perform. Mix it with emotions. Feel that you are going to win. When a negative thought comes up, replace it with affirmation right away. Do a self talk. The ability good, I can exhaustion. If you're nervous, I'm shaking calm and relaxed at all times. Do it repeatedly."

He said that as the International Ambassador of the United States Bowling Congress, he has been around the globe to train and certify bowling coaches—which would have been costly on their end if they did it on their own.

He also said his energy booster Nutrilite Double X, which contains 32 vitamins, 9 minerals and 27 phytonutrients, helped compensate for the increased demands on his body.

Double X, made by Get Satisfying who is considered the global leader in dietary supplements, fast in 80 literature nutritional prevention, targeting key groups of well-functioning free radicals namely hydroxyl, superoxide, singlet oxygen, peroxyl and peroxynitrite.

Nepomuceno was also named by the prestigious Bowlers Journal as "the Greatest International Bowler of All Time."

He has collected 110 titles here and abroad, with perfect 300 scores 14 times, and has received three Guinness World Records in bowling.

# Drastic measures for body fats too excessive

By Charles E. Rubio

DID YOU KNOW THAT 1/6 of the world's adult population is now overweight or obese?

There's 1.116 billion individuals whose level body fats have exceeded limit, making them susceptible to developing health-related problems like joint pains, depression, type 2 diabetes, heart disease, stroke and certain types of cancer.

"Excessive weight gain is caused by so many factors completing together. While genetics play a major role, the increased consumption of more energy-dense, nutrient-poor foods with high levels of sugar and saturated fats, combined with reduced physical activity all work together in increasing the number of overweight or obese populaces around the world," lamented Dr. Ferdinand Rosario Francisco, a board-certified surgeon in Bariatric and Metabolic Diseases in Quezon City.

As expert in dealing with the causes, prevention and treatment of obesity, Francisco reported that doctors belonging to this field of expertise can take up the drastic steps to effectively help patients reduce their excessive weight problems.

## More and more

"Obesity is a chronic disease and not a cosmetic issue. While it's true that patients who are severely overweight will lose some weight on dieting and doing some forms of physical exercises, they won't be able to keep it off and they won't be enough to significantly impact their health," Francisco said.

That is the reason Francisco was glad Joel Ayala, a 39-year-old real estate and property hiring officer from Davao City, has decided to do something about her weight despite the fact that she is not yet suffering from any ailment.

"She wanted to arrest her uncontrolled weight gain. At 5'3" she tipped the scale at 111.5 kilograms. Gold

J. HLICH Ingleer Ayala is confident that Francisco is her surgeon who can help her in the coming months.

## Is there still a (sex) life after a heart attack?

MEDICAL FILES

Rafael Castillo

MUCH CURIOSITY BOUND A compilation of questions patients would like to ask their doctors but are afraid or too ashamed to. One of the questions heart patients are ever eager to ask, but rarely do is: Resuming to sexual intimacy will subvalue a heart attack?

A few patients successful and bold enough to ask. I remember a middle-aged patient who raised me this question while still recovering from a heart attack in the hospital's intensive care unit (ICU). I answered in jest, "Else while you're still in the ICU."

Obviously, it's ill-advised to resume sexual activity during the acute phase of the heart attack even if it is uncomplicated. But for most patients who survived their heart attacks, and are no longer having chest pains while ordinary physical activities, sexual intimacy can be safely resumed within a few weeks following a heart attack.

## Further tested

Doctors may do further tests to find out if those who are really high risk to develop another heart attack but even without these tests one can determine whether a heart patient is ready to resume sex if he can already walk briskly for 15 minutes or climb up one flight of stairs without experiencing undue shortness of breath and chest pain. Without these warning symptoms, there is little danger in having sex after a heart attack, provided it's not the acrobatic or other more strenuous types of sex.

As a general rule, the biggest risk of an attack occurs in the first two hours following sex. For those without heart problems, that risk is a negligible two in a million. For heart patients, especially following a heart attack, the odds rise to only 20 in a million, or one in 50,000 or 0.00002 percent. Most heart attack patients would readily agree that this is a reasonable risk worth taking.

Dr. James Muller, associate professor of medicine at Brigham Hospital in the United States, led a research group that looked into this problem and they published their findings in the Journal of the American Medical Association.

Their study was the first that provided actual numbers on the risk of sexual activity for heart patients. Doctors previously had no way to advise their actual survivors based on hard clinical evidence. Hence, many of them, and particularly their spouses, were afraid to have sex because they thought it might be very dangerous and can even cause sudden death in the patient.

## Important finding

An important finding in this study was that regular progressive exercise following a heart attack can reduce, practically eliminate, the risk of resumption of sexual activity. "We found a correlation: briefly, the more a person exercised, the less the risk," Muller said.

Muller's study involved 1,466 male and female heart-attack victims, 888 of whom were men, aside active. The researchers did not include intercourse about what kind of sex the person had, the intensity, ages of the patients compared to their partners, or whether or not it was extramarital.

## Deaths that occur

Another interesting study on the subject by cardiologist Dr. Gudmon Jackson has found that 75 percent of deaths that occur during sexual intercourse are in people having extramarital affairs and in men who are much older than their sexual partners.

Robert Deboult, of Stanford University Medical School, wrote in an editorial titled "One Last Thing to Worry About," that the findings of Muller and his colleagues should "symbolize physicians to overcome their reluctance to discuss this vital aspect of human functioning with their patients. After all, patients are interested not only in the years in their lives, but also in the freshness of their years."

No doubt, an active sex life can add life to the years of heart patients, and there's absolutely no reason (most patients should not return to a full sex life following a heart attack. A word of caution though, just avoid extramarital affairs and much younger partners!

# Can herbs provide help in diabetes-induced sexual dysfunction?

Sexual dysfunction is a serious physical and psychological disorder that millions of people worldwide are suffering from.

For most of them, diabetes is very likely the main cause.

In fact, diabetic men are three times more likely to suffer from erectile dysfunction or impotency, as the condition calls are denoted by high blood glucose.

Likewise, many diabetic women become prone to experience sexual dysfunction and low intensity of the vaginal muscles which interferes with intercourse or they are unable to achieve orgasm.

While it is true that many diabetics ultimately develop sexual dysfunction, a lot of groundbreaking studies involving medicinal plants offer hope of a cure.

Diabetic women's sexual cravings and physiological responses can be positively affected by herbs traditionally used in the Amerindian medicine for thousands of years, stated on the first beneficial effects on sexual performance. Extensively studied in several countries, they were found to have the unique ability to address the root cause of the dysfunction through the active phytochemicals—procedures to—which they contain.

In Singapore, extensive clinical testing found that premenopausal improved sexual drive and enhanced erection, resulting in successful sexual intercourse after 10 days of taking it.

In Malaysia, studies revealed that premenopausal increased sperm quality and quantity, and other revealed in enhanced libido, erection, ejaculation, and orgasm with no adverse side effects.

In Singapore, Diabetic erectile dysfunction found by researchers to increase sexual desire and enhanced sexual stimulation in diabetic women who have developed sexual dysfunction. 90% of the menopausal women in the study group also experienced enhanced libido and improvements in their psychosexual status.

Phytomedicine certifies, on the other hand, that damiana serves as a powerful sexual stimulant as well as provide nutritive and tonic support to the nervous system, the endocrine system, the reproductive organs, increases blood flow to the genitals, and enhances sensation and desire.

The ability to relaxed, if not reverse, sexual dysfunction is just one of the many ways that Ayurvedic herbs address diabetic complications. Equally important is their ability to help prevent other complications which make diabetes truly life threatening. They include heart disease, kidney failure, blindness, diabetic foot gangrene, and stroke.

Since sexual dysfunction affects deep psychological wounds as well as physical ones, herbs that address emotional problems are expected to spark interest, if not trigger a quest such to find them.

Fortunately for diabetics, the availability of herbal supplements makes this search easier.

One such supplement which contains Tribulus terrestris and Phytomedicine centella is Vigrin 40+, a natural anti-diabetic supplement which is also a powerful sexual enhancer for both men and women.

Vigrin 40+ is now formulated with the unique all the constituents of diabetic nutrition including both insulin dependent and the female sexual dysfunction, and is widely available in the Philippines.

# PROPERTY

Edited by Cesar D. Manguerra

# Cebu expo offers RP a sustainable path

By Charles E. Rukan

EVERYONE KNOWS our global environment is suffering and most people, given the chance, want to do something constructive about it.

But finding a path to sustainable living is not easy. There's the question of cost, where to source and how to choose the right materials or labor to enable or permit wife to be able to achieve the desired results.

Here in the Philippines being sustainable ranks low on most people's list of priorities due to preoccupations with other more pressing problems including food and shelter.

The solutions lies in your Pfide there are now individuals and groups here already discovering their way to sustainable living, they are not in enough. Through what we have done here, we hope to get more people interested in living sustainably," said Lilibeth Abad, managing director of LA Bureau and Co. Inc. (Ladet).

### 17th staging

In cooperation with Reed-Construction Data Inc., Ladet has organized the 17th CebuSeco, which is set to run from June 3 to 6.

Happening at the Cebu Trade Hall, located at the third level of SM City Cebu, the CebuSeco is the biggest and longest running annual convention-trade exhibit in southern Philippines.

Mariano Sr. heads this year's list of sponsors.

This year's CebuSeco will showcase some of the products and services that reap for environment "Green scope" to building a more sustainable environment. These products and services, for example, would help home builders save energy and water more efficiently without spending so much.

### Lineup

One should expect a complete lineup of energy saving home products to light saving control device which automatically turns the light "on and off."

There's also alternative energy sources like photovoltaic that produces weak power.

Abad said they will also be presenting water saving devices like showers with dual flushing capability, water flow reducing aerating taps as well as many water treatment technology.

She added that the 17th CebuSeco will also feature products that could improve indoor environment quality like insulating materials, low odor paints, PVC-U windows, uPVC door and window system and building materials with insulating properties.

Also to be featured are products that will help people use resources more efficiently like the finger-jointed engineered wood, prefabricated wall system with insulating properties, as well as hollow block, roof paneling, waterproofing, and insulation rolled iron site and products that extend landscaping to walls and roofing and ornament double-entrances.

New products appearing for the first time will include Panasonic's automatic time switch, door sensor and voice alarm, and sliding doorless restroom, entertainment and windows.

List of other participants could be accessed at www.cebuseco@reedconstdata.com

### Green seminar

More importantly the 17th CebuSeco is going to be the venue for several green seminar to be conducted by the United Architects of the Philippines-Green Architecture Movement (UAP-GAM), an advocacy arm of UAP chaired by architect Ilya Sobrevinals.

Since its inception, UAP-GAM has organized several programs which aim to educate, encourage and promote the green and sustainable design practices in the country. In fact, the group has been a recent recipient of the Fr. Ben Vellet Award for Environmental Heroism given during the celebration of the 2009 International Earth Day last April.

The green seminar would cover topics like Basics of Green Architecture by architect Ms. Lubis Dujo-Ong in and Passive for Energy Efficiency by architect Miguel Guevarra III.

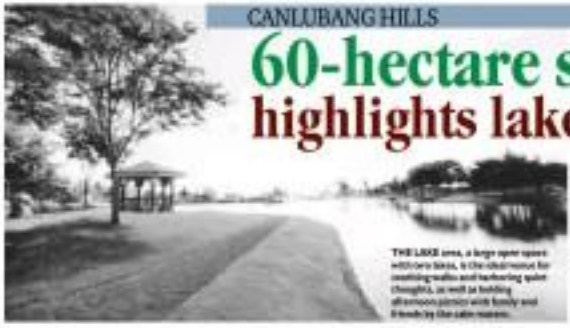
Scheduled on June 5 (1:00 to 5 p.m.) the seminars will be held at the SM Conference Center (adjacent to the Cebu Trade Hall, 3/F SM City Cebu).

"Realizing the power of expo to effect change in the public mindset, our desire to highlight products, solutions and design practices which are aligned to sustainability in the built environment among others is equally interesting topics," Abad explained.

A similar expo dubbed Construction Show Manila will be held in September at the SMX Convention Center.

CANLUBANG HILLS

# 60-hectare subdivision highlights lakes, open spaces



THE LAKE area, a large open space with two lakes, is the ideal venue for soothing walks and refreshing quiet thoughts, as well as holding afternoon picnics with family and friends by the calm waters.

GREENWAYS, common grounds observably two rows of homes, provide abundant recreation, light and privacy as well as quiet buffer between lots.

By Tess R. Salazar

IT PROMISES TO BE the least dense of Ayala Land Premier's residential developments to 50 years since Forbes Park, and the expectation is that not only human beings (of the measured kind) will be able to appreciate this kind of tranquility.

If the property's original owners—the Yuchengco and Ortigas families—wouldn't mind sharing this bit-hectare spot in Laguna province with 300 or so humans and their kin, then nature would have stamped its approval on this project. It would also mean that ALP would have made the least impact on nature as possible in developing the property.

The 60-hectare Monticello was originally a "fun" property that had an eye for preserving the natural environment. Ironically when Ayala Land Premier took over the development, it had to follow the original plan. Which would just be as well, since ALP was already in the midst of developing the 1,700-hectare verandah Nuvali that surrounded the Monticello property.

## Sustainability

Nuvali vice chairman driven by the themes of sustainability, guided by the objective of providing residents and investors an ecologically, socially and economically sustainable lifestyle, one with energy efficient residences.

Even then, ALP paid particular attention to Monticello's Mediterranean-themed residential development, as the property encompassed a bird sanctuary and twin lakes.

Planned for a thinly populated area that only had 200 lots or four houses per hectare, Monticello still required an investment of half a billion pesos just to realize this close-to-unspoiled concept. Better, according to Jesús L. Jugo, head of ALP's land businesses group.

With a substantial investment on upgrading the community amenities, "the master plan of ALP's latest acquisition stresses the preservation of existing site conditions, the efficient use of natural resources, and the introduction of technology that aids its sustainability," he added.

Meyl Platero Rodrigues, project manager of Monticello, stressed that it "is guaranteed to be in harmony with man and nature."

"We preserved the natural site conditions and we used the natural resources efficiently. We respected the original terrain of the property. From one's lot, there's a view of the Makiling, Mt. Banahaw, Tagaytay Ridge, and the Malolos skyline depending on the orientation of the lot," Rodrigues said.

He added that the lakeside will be improved and facilities such as an outdoor and picnic area, jogging and bike paths will be added to encourage residents to use less of their cars and more of their legs, while an open basketball court will also be built.

There are two existing lakes within the grounds. The smaller lake, one-and-a-half hectares in area, would act as the "utility" catch basin for the "Mataong Tubig" type of the word). Mataong Tubig is an amateur spring coming from the Tagaytay Ridge that will be used to irrigate the greenways and other common areas in the property.

The larger lake is about two hectares in area and three meters deep, will situated a one-km shoreline. This larger lake is coincidentally fed by freshwater from Mataong Tubig and will serve as the recreational space for fishing and RC boats.

Mataong Tubig also powers a mini-hydroelectric plant that generates electricity to light the development's main streets.

According to ALP officials, approximately 50 percent of the land would be dedicated to parks, greenway and roads. For "ventilation and daylight, looking at the configuration of the lot, a natural breeze would pass through the greenways.

Monticello is located inside the more-or-less-secondary town center of Barangay Nuvali, a new take on urban living where people will be encouraged to "respect" nature more by, for example, encouraging them to bike to and from work close to one their cars.

Monticello is a 15-minute drive from the Nuvali's central business district. Nuvali, a new take on urban living where people will be encouraged to "respect" nature more by, for example, encouraging them to bike to and from work close to one their cars

# Green integrated design approach

GREEN ARCHITRENDS

*Armando Ang Jerez*

AT THE RATE WE ARE SPENDING the Earth's natural capital, we are not promising future generations' ability to meet their own needs.

In this day of overpopulation in the planet? Consider the following. The Earth's population of 6.7 billion if placed in the United State's Texas with a land area of 681,668 square kilometer will have a population density of 21 persons more than of Singapore. As we know, Singapore has only one half of Metro Manila's population density of 16,000 per sq km. Hence Manila's population density is similar to that of Jakarta, Beijing Shanghai, Taipei, and Seoul, and yet the second most densely populated region in the Philippines next to Metro Manila, Cabuhuyao has a population density of hardly 880 people per sq km.

If the cause of the Earth's degradation of natural resources is not overpopulation, this writer believes it is the present generation's high consumerism. Our ravenous appetite for material goods has indeed put a big strain on the natural functions of our planet. To achieve a sustainable society is therefore an important goal of each responsible citizen.

Buildings are the source of 40 percent of waste worldwide, and use 40 percent of the world's raw materials. This puts building industry practitioners in a good position to put forward the sustainability imperative.

### Integrated design approach

A sustainable way to design, construct and operate a building that is gaining momentum is the integrated design process or IDP.

In a recent workshop, SCI Asia operator Ts. Nirmal Rikhiram, editor-in-chief of Executive Magazine, said IDP puts emphasis on a fundamental change in thinking and in ways of operating. It brings all design and construction disciplines together with the owner and end user, to formulate a shared vision about the building to be put up.

IDP is a whole systems way of thinking that gets all concerned to spend a good amount of time up front for integrated planning and design. It is all about teamwork, and the principal architect is not seen as the one who gives form to the project. He is only an active participant in exploring alternative ideas among team experts who play active roles at the start of the process.

This approach is also termed front loaded design because it is costly in terms of time and money in the beginning of the design process. But the mistakes avoided, the energy costs saved, and environmental integrity of the project far outweighs initial costs.

### Failures of typical design programs

In the traditional design program, the team members build on compartments. Hardly does each discipline think in relation to the total project.

Big picture goals and targets are not discussed. Team members do not feel committed to a shared vision and are comfortable with compliance with their own area or part.

Cost is fragmented in the different areas of the work. Estimates made are not arrived at after thorough study of building optimization. A piece of design tends to be the basis for value-engineering individual components. Optimizing components in isolation tends to work against the idea of achieving synergies. For example, choosing cheaper glass with lesser thermal performance results in upsizing the mechanical systems.

Costs are seen as up front expenditure, and rarely an total cost across the life of the building.

Lastly, professionals are paid according to the cost of the building, not on how the building will perform.

### Achieve integrated design process

First it is important to appoint a project team early and to treat the process as a collaborative effort.

Second, a schedule of periodic review workshops with the whole team present must be made.

Third, benchmarks for the project are established.

Fourth, the benchmarks is set from each simple targets.

Fifth, set aside a part of the budget for greening.

Sixth, as the project progresses from conceptual to developed design, test ideas along green principles.

Seventh, see the project across its life when choosing a material.

Last, reward the team for long-term performance.

Holistic design and planning uses the interconnections between their parts. Serious steps are arrived at that address multiple problems at the same time. For example, a residential community designed with narrower streets results in less storm water runoff, enabling smaller storm detention basins to handle storm water, with no need for storm sewers. A bigger area left for trees improves ambience and reduces the need for air-conditioning.

Up front goals should be set early in the conceptual process. They should be quantifiable, such as, we want 'X' percent energy saving."

These goals can be reviewed, changed at each stage of the project. But we know that the greatest opportunity for making changes in the design at the least cost happens at the early part.

Other green considerations would include economized energy and water consumption, improved indoor quality, recycling and material reuse, improved durability, longevity and less maintenance.

*For comments or inquiries, e-mail armando@executivegroup.com.*

THE INTEGRATED design approach brings all design and construction disciplines together with the owner and end user, to formulate a shared vision about the green building to be put up.

# Chateau Elysée showcased in Philippine Fashion Week

THE LUXURY OF FRENCH RIGHTER-CHATEAU living is the inspiration behind the fashion creations that will be paraded off the runway at *SM Residences'* one night presentation, done in collaboration with the Philippine Fashion Week.

The SM Residences presentation will be held today at the SMX Convention Center, Mall of Asia Complex as part of the Philippine Fashion Week.

SM Residences is the brand for all residential condominium projects of SM Development Corp. offering homes with first-class amenities standing subdued elegance and practical designs—truly an investment that provides greater value.

### Dwelling for urbanites

Among the residential condominiums to be featured in SM Residences' presentation is Chateau Elysée. It is an ideal dwelling for urbanites whose definition of home is a sanctuary of privacy and comfort, and community as an ecosystem, self-contained where one can live, work, play, shop, mingle and belong.

To interpret its chartered lifestyle into fashion, Chateau Elysée presents prominent young designers Michelle Lim who conceptualized a collection dubbed as Lime Stocks. This ensemble of urban wear line, classically highlights textures, contrast, gloss, gleam, chrome, gold and goldwire plays.

Chateau Elysée provides a new sense of community living in a French Mediterranean inspired Condoville, sprawling on 4.8 hectares of prime land, with more than half of the property devoted to amenities and breathing space, and a clubhouse with complete facilities.

Every living room is especially designed from the living room to the kitchen—evoking an air of comfort and freedom with high ceilings that create a sense of airy openness and wide windows that look out across pleasant height or glimpse of gardens and resort-style.

Stepping outside, Chateau Elysée places you only minutes away from the Makati Business District, the International Airport, and the shopping, dining and entertainment destinations of SM Residences. Chateau Elysée is a cradle of fine-star living and an investment that provides great value.

### Amenities, facilities

The impressive amenities and facilities of Chateau Elysée were perfect backdrops for showcasing the creations at Philippine Fashion Week designers Alamo, Bo-morang, Amelia Custodio, Arnold Lubrin, Gerry Kingchat, 18 Barrels, Jeffrey Rodador and Jonas Jimenez. These were beautifully captured by Oin Perez.

Models Kaye Agnes and Mary Ann Sison were dolled up by RJ de Leon of Makeup Forum, with their hair done by stylist Ve Ismeria, and styling by Russell Bustos.

Other SM Residences developments or projects include Mezza Residences in Sta. Mesa, Quezon City; Grass Residences at the SM North Edsa Complex; Berkeley Residences on Kamputan Avenue, Quezon City; Field Residences at the SM City Bicutan, Parañaque; Sea Residences at the SM Mall of Asia Complex; and Princeton residences at the UP-Ayala Technohub in Diliman, Quezon City.

SM Residences caters mainly to the middle-income market and offers affordable flats made for first-time quality, high-value investments.

## Cityland Successfully Held Makati Executive Tower III Open House

Cityland does it again. True to its slogan of "we commit, we deliver", Cityland has steadily gained a reputation in the delivery and completion of all its projects. New investors and repeated buyers alike made a good showing at the recently concluded open house.

Cityland is the only developer which has been awarded as the Leading Condominium Developer for two (2) consecutive years by the PHILKAB under the Office of the President in 2002 for the years 2001 to 2002 and in 2007 for the years 2004 to 2006. For almost 36 years now, Cityland buildings dominate the skyline of Makati, Mandaluyong, Ortigas, Pasig, and Manila area.

Makati Executive Tower III is a 39-storey commercial office and residential condominium alongside two previously completed buildings, Makati Executive Tower I and Makati Executive Tower II. Conveniently located along Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City, the projects right at the center of various places of interest, where practically everything is within reach.

Well planned commercial, office and residential units of studio, 1, 2 and 3 bedroom types are available in cash or easy installment scheme of up to ten (10) years to pay. Features and amenities will be provided to ensure the comfort of occupants lifestyle.

For further information, please call us at CITYLAND Makati - 810-2222, Ortigas - 687-3333, Wil Corp - 567-3333, Manila - 242-1212 or log on to our website at www.cityland.net or email us at investment@cityland.net.

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# Make homebuilding easier with MetroHome

# Modernist and romantic by the shores of Phuket

DESIGN DIMENSIONS

Isabel Berenguer Asuncion

HALF OF THE FUN of traveling to the beach is getting to easy to difference resort hotels, trying out various cuisines, checking out the facilities, pampering yourself in a spa or bathroom, and enjoying a bed that is thoughtfully put together with the promise of a good night's sleep. The other half of the fun is discovering new eye candy.

While most hotels put a premium on service or support the whole hotel experience, very few incentivize visual novelty as something to enjoy and treasure, too. As people are starting to recognize that design is a critical component of a user experience, most hospitality facilities are investing in their own creative-mind vision offering for guests to remember them by and many have gone out of the box and have stepped into the future of resort living.

FLORAL wall etching and decorative candelabra create an chic ambiance at the entrance of this resort's bistro

One such gem of a hotel is the Split Resort on quiet Mai Khao beach in Phuket. Built nearly two years ago, Isla is definitely not your typical beach resort. This is where Bauhaus modernist meets baroque romance. This is where cast concrete walls, tall glazed windows and lotus pools are executed together with the typical resort hotel elements—sheer curtains, decorative tiles, large pillows and cast stone bathtubs—to create a visual experience that brings two seemingly different worlds together.

As one arrives at the hotel, black paved walkways are studded by steel-framed structures with flat roofs, an architectural theme that permeates the entire facility. The public area pavilions, namely the front desk and the restaurant, are predominantly in black, taupe and cream of white. In the evenings the blackness of it all makes the perfect backdrop for its reflecting pools and candles that all glimmer and shimmer against the darkness.

PEACEFUL pool terraces and landscape decorations detailing (above) together in the guest villa. Do the fronts and corners of open-air spaces invite more floating pools, and bathrooms (left) are into the bedroom?

While the structures are clean and linear, decorative touches are intricately detailed, a fitting contrast to the bareness and angularity of the structures. These come in the form of wooden fretwork, sandblasted glass panels, inlaid ceramic tiles, blown glass artwork and floral etching on shutter discs.

The guest villas, in contrast to the public spaces, are coated in the lighter shades of white, taupe and white that wash their interior spaces with natural light. High ceilings and tall doors and window spaces further emphasize the lightness and airiness of the villas.

A VERY spare, bare and private outdoor entryway to the spa. In the evenings, indirect lighting and misting devices along the edges of the water create an ethereal feel.

## Separate structures

Picking up from the concept of Robinson cluster houses, the lawyer villas layer the structures for the living spaces and the bedrooms, and are linked together by a lap pool bordered by patios and sun decks. The bathrooms are almost all entirely outdoor, making use of practically all the rear perimeter spaces of the villas for expansive wash, bath and toilet spaces that seamlessly integrate into the landscape.

Certain areas in the resort like the spa, venues have looking very modernist Japanese, while the public washrooms by the restaurant are of the way of extreme opposite, with a more Moroccan feel to it. Both styles are executed with such finesse and attention to detail that they seem to belong in the same resort.

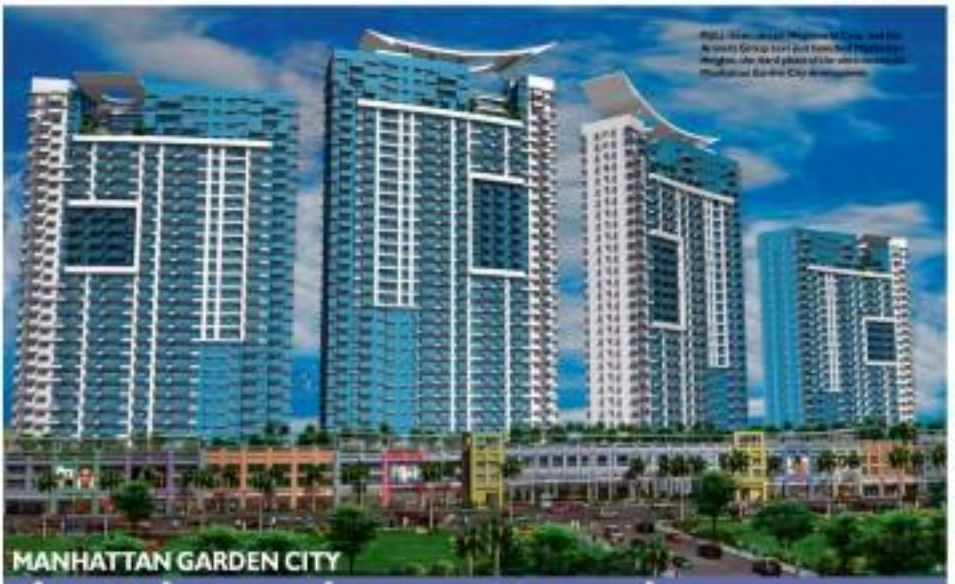
The villas are designed to accommodate functions in different environments — an outdoor/indoor relationship between internal and external spaces, a seamless interface between internal and external, and a relationship between the various functions, giving all spaces the flexibility required for a range of guests' interests, of lifestyles and functions.

Flowing libations: The romantic relationship between nature and structure manifests itself in the Thai tradition of floating candles, which is why the resort's bar is designed to be surrounded by water features and decorative candles. The bar, one of Isla's natural centers of the environment, is flanked by lotus pools and is surrounded by flowing and natural stone stairs. Guests can sit at the infinity lap pool which creates a scene of sheer tranquility with the illusion of water flowing down the river below. Predominantly gardenia, scented candles and floating petals add a romantic touch, almost of a Phuket weekend experience.

As a new luxury residence for owners of Private Residence and Phuket Villas, a selection of privilege events used both in the area of golf, and particularly the residents of those villages through the rays of the countryside and a leisure place on the beach, and the Laguna Phuket Golf Club, and the Laguna Phuket Golf Club, and the Laguna Phuket Golf Club

# PROPERTY

Edited by Cesar D. Maglaqueng



MANHATTAN GARDEN CITY

# An idea whose time has come

By Charles E. Bolton

**With the record-breaking pace that we have achieved with the first two phases, we are optimistic about the launch of Manhattan Heights**

EVERYBODY TOUTS GREEN AND sustainable development today but very few could really boast like Megaworld Corp. whose ongoing development at the heart of Araneta Center in Quezon City is showing every one else here to build a community where people could live comfortably with their environment.

The garden-inspired, transit-oriented Manhattan Garden City is, in fact, fast taking shape with the development planning of the fifth phase—called Manhattan Heights—now under way.

"With the record-breaking pace that we have achieved with the Manhattan Parkway and Manhattan Parkview (all sold out in just two years) we are optimistic that the Manhattan Heights will also perform excellently," announced Anthony Charlemagne Yu, president of Megaworld Central Properties Inc.

The project that will be located on the Ali Mall (where transport terminal is now located) is set to generate at least P5 billion in sales, revenues.

## Four towers

The Manhattan Heights will feature four high-rise towers that will add more than 1,000 units to Manhattan Garden City.

The first tower, rising 38 stories, will have 460 residential units, all featuring balconies.

Unit prices start at P2.8 million for a studio, P3.7 million for a 1-bedroom, and P5.1 million for a 2-bedroom suite.

"From these price packages, it is clear that we are refocusing mid- to upper-income homebuyers as well as young urban professionals and investors. The development's accessibility to the university belt in Manila (thanks to the fully operational Light Rail Transit Line 2) and its proximity to the University of the Philippines and Ateneo de Manila University also makes the Manhattan Heights very attractive for students," added Yu.

CONVENIENCE: All a condo is an obvious role for residents to enjoy shopping and dining delights at the ground floor arcade of Manhattan Heights.

NEXT rule: As a transit-oriented development, Manhattan Garden City is the first and only one that boasts of links to both the LRT1 and MRT3 lines. Thus, residents have numerous points of the metro within reach.

## Sky garden

"The Manhattan Heights is the first Megaworld Corp. project to feature sky gardens, a concept that is set to bring the Manhattan City Garden's green developments to the next level," informed Yu.

The sky gardens, which are actually elevated forests placed on each of the tower's rooftops, involve the placement of natural water-proofing structures that not only cool the building's interiors naturally but also filter out the pollution of the surrounding air.

"The tropical plants, large foliage, wind flowers, accents, and water features that we have already placed on the assembly deck (fourth level) will be complemented by the sky gardens," explained Yu.

These green features also go in line with Manhattan City Garden's "oasis" concept where one may be able to feast on the meticulous and relaxing views that these greeneries provide.

"Combine this secure environment with the convenient lifestyle of high-rise and modern living, the Manhattan Heights is indeed an attractive proposition," assured Yu.

STRATEGIC location: Manhattan Garden City lies minutes from Araneta Center, the geographical heart of Metro Manila.

SKY gardens Read a book, have a mini chat, or just commune with nature at the sky garden floors of Manhattan Heights.

ANOTHER new features Sky lights are another new feature at Manhattan Heights, which boasts the green rooftop development concept planned for the entire Manhattan Garden City.

# A 'green' high-rise development

By Charlie E. Rulon

WITH THE FINAL PHASE OF THE Manhattan Garden City now underway, Megaworld Corp. is set to show the country how high-rise structures should be built the "green" way.

"Many of us desire to live in a place that provides a sort of sanctuary where we can rest and rejuvenate. With what we are developing, we will show that high-rise structures could also be agents of sustainability and green living," explained Anthony Charlemagne Yu, president of Megaworld Central Properties Inc.

For the first time in the country, Manhattan Heights feature green rooftops wherein the four high-rise towers will be decked with layers of vegetation.

Partially covered by a parapet, the garden will feature palm trees, vibrant flowering shrubs and other plants.

"These are not only for beautification purposes but they will serve to alleviate the environmental problems encountered in dense urban habitations and also to encourage sustainable development," said Yu.

As such these rooftop gardens will help mitigate the negative impacts of cities on the environment by conserving energy, improving air quality, assisting in rain water management, absorbing solar radiation, creating a natural habitat for birds and insects, as well as creating natural retreats.

## Popular

"This concept is very popular in European countries, especially Germany, in the United States, one great example that comes to mind is the Chicago City Hall," said Yu.

Yu added that other communities around the world face many challenges related to health and well being of their residents.

FINE dining: The Italian Gateway Mall offers Manhattan Garden City residents a memorable fine dining experience.

"Real estate in the city is building up uncontrollably because of ever-increasing number of urban infrastructure, worsening traffic, air pollution and the loss of greenery. The less cover and vegetation that we will incorporate here should reduce air temperature, resulting in energy savings for our residents," said Yu.

Yu said Megaworld Corp. is as committed to the preservation of the country's fragile environment and its bent on pursuing green initiatives at Manhattan Garden City.

"Indeed, urban developers like Megaworld Corp. are increasingly recognizing the importance of trees and other vegetation beyond their visual contribution to the cityscape. We hope that homebuyers and investors will respond overwhelmingly well to our commitment," he explained.

Indeed, with what Megaworld Corp. is doing at Manhattan Garden City, Yu is confident they may be able to influence other developers to do the similar concepts and create a more healthy and comfortable communities.

# Unparalleled lifestyle

By Charles E. Bohan

WITH THE LAUNCH OF THE MANHATTAN Heights, the third phase of the Manhattan Garden City, Megaworld Corp. will set the bar in high-rise development.

The four high-rise towers will also carry the artistic development's Art-Deco look.

"The design goes well with all the gardens and landscaping that we will place all over Manhattan Garden City," said Anthony Chai-lemagne Yu, president of Megaworld Central Properties Inc.

He informed that each tower will have uniquely designed sky garden that occupy the upper most level.

On the other hand, the garden decks located at the fourth level (amenity deck) will offer swimming pool, jogging tracks, meditation and contemplative area, swimming pool with kiddie pool, a spa and even a refreshing grill.

## Committed

"Megaworld Corp. remains committed to pursuing environment-friendly initiatives with regard to our amenities," explained Yu.

He added that future residents will have many opportunities for recreation as there will be a gym for those who want to stay in shape, a pool and spa for those who want to relax.

"Those who just like to enjoy the view, read a book or listen to music will have numerous options on what they would like to do this within the amenity deck," offered Yu.

Because of Manhattan Garden City's location at the Araneta Center, residents of the Manhattan Heights will be able to enjoy easy access to the Light Rail Transit Line 2 along Aurora Boulevard and the Metro Rail Transit 3 along Edsa.

## Connected

"The Manhattan Garden City is the first and only residential development connected to both lines. In other words, our residents are just a quick stroll away from these major transportation hub should they want to go to other parts of Metro Manila," explained Yu.

All the buildings, including the four towers of the Manhattan Heights, will be interconnected by a 720-meter "walkway that Megaworld Corp. will construct.

And because the four towers are within the Araneta Center, future residents of Manhattan Heights will be able to take advantage of all the shopping and dining destinations within the area, Gateway Mall, Ruffolo's, SM, Shoppesa, 43-Mall and Farmers Plaza.

The ground level of the Manhattan Heights will also have rows of lagestyle retail outlets.

## Balconies

"The first of the four towers, a 38-story residential high-rise, will have 436 units, each featuring a balcony that gives spectacular view of the Araneta Center and even the Manila Bay sunset," said Yu.

The balcony will also enable Manhattan Height's future residents to enjoy the relaxing view of the amenity deck below.

According to Yu, each unit will have provisions in some of modern life's conveniences like lines for telephone, CATV as well as hot and cold water supply.

"At Manhattan Heights, one will realize their dream to commune with nature but at the same time enjoy all the amenities that modern life offers. It's leading a completely balanced lifestyle," described Yu.

**GRAY** of amenities. A lap pool amid vibrant tropical landscaping is just one of the 28 major amenities on offer at Manhattan Heights.

**DESTINATION** mall. The world-class Gateway Mall complex and the Araneta Center's developments, which surrounds with Manhattan Heights.

**MODERN** lifestyle. Interior perspective of a master bedroom for Manhattan Heights

**WONDERFUL** views. All units at Manhattan Heights feature balconies, through which residents can view the many wonders of Araneta Center.

**FAMILY** outing. The entire family will enjoy the garden lifestyle all year long at Manhattan Garden City.

**GROUNDBREAKING**. In June 2007, Manhattan Garden City's phase 1 broke ground, led by (l-r) Filipinas Chairip Inc. Chairperson Stella Marquez Araneta, Araneta Group CEO Jorge Araneta, Megaworld Corp. Chair and CEO Andrew Tan, Quezon City Mayor Sonny Belmonte and Metro Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando.

**FULL** swing. Six of the towers, the first two towers at Manhattan Heights are structurally complete, while architecture is 30 percent complete.

To invest in and experience the garden lifestyle at Manhattan Heights, please call Megaworld at 818-2333 or email inquire@themanhattangardencity.com.

*From the metro's premier showcase of*
*condo living at its best...*



MANHATTAN HEIGHTS

at Manhattan Garden City
Araneta Center



## SLOW DOWN.

Leave your worries behind. At Manhattan Heights, your place has never been more refreshing. From your cozy home, everything you need is just a break in sight, within reach. Be close to nature in a unique sky garden and a skyline. Or, for at least five at the fourth level, offering more than 20 exciting ways to play.

## SPEED UP.

Leave the rest behind. Your home at the heart of the Araneta Center lets you get things going — in less time and with less stress. Stroll around your neighborhood leisurely. Explore the nearby Gateway Mall and Big Dome. And easily reach the best of the metro with the LRT-2 and MRT-3 just a few steps away.

Have a whole world of pleasure right at your fingertips.
And the entire metro at your feet. Manhattan Heights.



Celebrate an exceptional metro lifestyle only at Manhattan Heights.

- Your iconic community along Edsa, Bonifacio Avenue at the Araneta Center
- Friendly, convenient address with effortless connection to the LRT-2 and MRT-3 stations and a ground-level drive entrance
- Executive studio units and one- or two-bedroom homes with panoramic overlooking the Araneta Center and Manila Bay
- A sky garden with skylights located on the 4th floor exclusive to all unit owners
- Private, landscaped deck with a swimming pool complete, with lounge pool, sundeck, cabanas, whirlpool, outdoor bars, children's pool, garden areas, gazebos, playground, sun- and jogging paths, function room and a multi-purpose clubhouse, a meeting room with function rooms and a day care center
- Wide open spaces in the play basement garden residential phases
- Retail establishments on the ground floor
- Elevator cores from the basement parking to function and leisure amenities



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# Lindsay Lohan's ex is a smash in new Manila club

Samantha Ronson was the big come-on at LAX

FROM LR to LAX, Samantha Ronson on the decks

By Wenggie Gallego

IT WAS A HOT MAY FRIDAY evening as the crowd poured in to the newly opened LAX right behind the Mall of Asia. The grand hoy heroes was nowhere but Manila. It's night decisions DIDN'T mind being sardined to the party.

After all, throughout the day, there were many Samantha Ronson sightings on Facebook. Someone even let loose that Lindsay Lohan might be with her.

Of course, it was Bongsilim Inlee silent all over again because Lindsay Lohan was to where even Manila. Reckoning others can go as far as other countries, maybe, but the crowd was just as indulgent to find out the kind of mash-up Jason Dy Los Angeles-based DJ would spin for everyone.

The club's interiors are best described as plush. Red curtains, dark walls, good lighting, good sound system—when the lights were low and the DJ starts spinning, LAX is as good as they come. The seating areas are centered over the dance floor, resembling a gladiator arena or other skating rink. It's a good move because it gives the non-dancing patrons a bird's eye view of the dance floor.

Outside is a patio with the lazy river and a second DJ playing different tunes. It's a chance to get fresh air and tell the story of the party. It's something clubs and bars of Makati and The Fort cannot offer.

### Mashing it up, LA-style

The crowd reached maximum capacity before midnight, and every time standing and Manila's other's who in full attendance, everyone anxiously waiting for Ronson.

Ronson stepped out 30 minutes after midnight before a

VISITING Dir Samantha

Yu S. Pan and Dino Yi of LAX

# Lindsay Lohan's ex is a smash in new Manila club

Some Page C1

dancing crowd. The Englishborn singer-actor-author and new DJ, wearing a hat and Guess and Hostel T-shirt, didn't even ask drama she caused. She began setting her equipment and hop-on to prepare for her set.

She kicked it hard with an R&B song and had down another before hitting the crowd with an electro-house song. The crowd went wild and the dance floor went wild. As people danced and punched the air to the beat, she never once turned or smiled. She studied the crowd, watching the areas with the most activity and checking out the spaces on the dance floor where no one was moving. She hit her stride with a pumped-up version of Katy Perry's "Teenage," which remixes Lady Gaga's "Fashion," Beyoncé's "Single Ladies," and even, with a sincere pinch of Lady GaGa's "Bad Romance" and "Poker Face."

Despite her indifference, I did notice Romeo snapping a "boom-ch" while text-messaging from taking her photos. She might not be warm and friendly but she was no complainer.

There's no doubt that LAX knocked with a bang. The guest some workmates many hangs-ups with open arms and an open bar. And with LAX's good mind-set, children may have a diverse opinion other than the clubs at The Fort. And it's always good to have options.

#11 open (and sore) in Woosa

## Pub Quiz: Hotshot

# Tasty Murphy's law

### An Irish pub in Makati is the real thing

IT HAD BEEN HAPPENING FOR several Tuesday nights already. I'd let on my list, about to dash to sleep, when my mobile phone would start buzzing and beeping.

It was Raffy again. He was barely audible because of noise in the background, he would ask me a question. Again. Last week it was about Australia. Tonight, it was about whether Bolivia's capital was situated under its tourth and dropped the call. Again. I'm fed it. I have got to get the reward who has gotten my friend all riled up the past couple of weeks. Apparently, he's been frequenting Murphy's, an Irish pub located in the middle of Legaspi Village. Our Tuesday evening, a group of us went to check what all the fuss was about.

The cab still stood in traffic. A table because the place was packed from those pubs passing in the quiz. Since we couldn't get a proper table where the quiz was being conducted, we planted ourselves at the far end of the bar and ordered to just sample the food. To start, I had the Steak Tips which was flavorful though the portion could have been bigger. To accompany my fare, I also had some Hot Wings which went fine. Though I've had spicier wings, the dinner, I had the Fish and Chips (two weeks' marinate and longer). I also order off my friend's Steak Pie which was also excellent. I wanted to try some of the Irish fare but, unfortunately I was pretty full. I noted that aside from your basic pub fare, there were a lot of Asian-inspired dishes (curries, chilies, etc), which I might as try the next time I'm there.

Murphy's is like your neighborhood bar. I saw a family having dinner with their children, the bar team with bridge servers. Isn't pub regulars, a good mix of expats and locals, a couple of tables of executive-looking types, and of course those participating in the pub quiz. I wasn't disrupt the quiz, since no one can check out the screen thrown over-head in the area. One thing's for sure—the farming involved much of expats and visitor for the top slot. Sorry but Raffy won't be part of the team.

Our Name : Murphy's Makati
Address : Ground Condo St Building
100 Tu Pinlac St., corner St. Albert St.
Legaspi Village, Makati
Contact info : 894-3884 / m.facebook.com/murphysmakati
Hours : Open from 10 a.m. until 1 a.m., Monday to Saturday
Quiz Nights are every Tuesday from 8pm
Specialties : Our Wings (Php145)
Steak Tips (Php215)
Fish and Chips (Php249)
Meat Pie (Php 195)
BBQ Back pax ribs (Php179 Beer Good (Php80) / Imported (Php200 and up)
Murphy's Irish Beer (Php120)
Various mixings whisky and single malts available

CHECK out quiz nights at Murphy's.

# Carnival for the en

By Ruby de Vera

HSBC IS NOT ONLY ONE OF THE world's most prominent names in corporate banking, it is also one of the pioneers in the battle against climate change.

The HSBC Climate Partnership is a $100 million five-year program designed to help reverse, limited causes. The bank is also the first financial institution to go carbon neutral.

Recently it held the Hometown Carnival, by far the biggest initiative of the company's efforts to engage its employees in environmental awareness.

The event, touted after the four elements—earth, wind, energy, fire—was an all-day affair, with activities designed for the whole family. Balloon artists, tattoo, glitter, tattoo and still without doubt their very amazing booths and ready that sold all kinds of things from refreshments to clothes.

The employees were divided into five color teams, each team racing to become the top finishers of the day. Proceeds would go to the World Wildlife Fund for Nature (WWF) and the Children's Environmental Awareness and Action Foundation (CEAMF).

These two organizations have long been the beneficiaries of HSBC's programs, representing the company's corporate sustainability theme on the environment and education.

HSBC president and CEO Mark Watkinson said that the Hometown Carnival was a way to bring the staff and their families together, along with the added thrill of helping the environment. There

HSBC president and CEO Mark Watkinson converts P1 million to WWF and

# When Pussycats rule

**Here's your chance to see them for free**

Nino Mark M. Sabitan
24/7 Correspondent

IT'S CLEAR AS A MEow—the Pussycat Dolls are dominating the world with their catchy tunes, eye-popping chest pops (among many other challenging dance moves, of course) and attention-grabbing clothes.

It wasn't so long ago when the six beautiful and talented girls of the sing-and-dance-and-game group came out with their debut single, "Don't Cha," and had everyone singing, dancing...and yes, even gyrating—along to the addicting track. Before long, the Pussycat Dolls became even bigger pop stars, churning out one hit after another ("Stickwitu," "Sway," "Beep," "I Don't Need a Man," and "Wait a Minute").

Now, the girls (now down to five, after original member Carmit left) continue their quest to rule the world with their latest album, "Doll Domination." Armed with seriously addicting songs such as the head bop-inducing "When I Grow Up" and the mid-tempo "I Hate This Part," Nicole, Jessica, Ashley, Kimberly and Melody are coming/hopping to promote their new album.

Next month, the Pussycat Dolls will again set foot in the Philippines for a one-night-only performance that is sure to get everyone up on his feet. Brought to the country by Clear and MTV Philippines, "A Clear Doll Domination: The Pussycat Dolls Live in Manila" is happening at SM Mall of Asia Concert Grounds this June 13.

Can't wait to sing "Sai Ikr" with the Dolls? Go get tickets now! A Gold ticket is worth P9,000, a Silver one P7,800, and the General Admission P5,00 (plus 3% convenience charge). Just to make you do a happy dance in the fact that if you grab your tickets now, you can avail yourself of several promos that can get you huge discounts or even free tickets.

With Clear's Pussycat Dolls Early Bird Ticket Promo, you can have up to 50% discount. Just buy one 200ml Clear Scrub at any SM Supermarket, and present proof of purchase at any TicketNet or TicketWorld from May 1 to 31.

SM MOA patrons can get 50% off their tickets too, by buying a set of 3M Cotton Buds (a set is composed of 4 Cotton Buds, and is worth P1,00) or accumulating P500 worth of food purchase in any SM MOA food establishments, then presenting the proof of purchase in any TicketNet or TicketWorld outlets, or at the SM MOA Clear Doll Domination booth located at the Main Mall Atrium fronting Wisteria.

Thirsty for more pulse rush? Go to any supermarket, convenience store, restaurant or bar, and purchase at least P100 worth of Mello Ready-to-Drink Cocktails (available in Blue Cola Reverse, Citrus Chill and Strawberry Margarita flavors), then present proof of purchase at any TicketNet or TicketWorld branch to get up to a 50% discount. Each purchase entitles buyer to a discount on one (1) ticket only. Dough.

To win two tickets, register your creative at www.pulsecrashhermilles.com. You get included in the raffle after signing up, completing and activating your account. Want to increase your chances of winning? Just invite others to join by referring e-mail addresses.

What do you want to be when you grow up? E-mail the author at nino.sabitan@yahoo.com.

**THE DOLLS will soon be in Manila**

US POSSIBLE
Help Fulfill Your Body's Requirement For Energy

FRIED or FRIABLE:
Potato is a love-describing white food that make you fat. That's because they're nothing but empty calories.

If you answered "true," then you have fallen prey to one of the most pervasive nutritional myths circulating today. Here's the skinny on potato:

1. Starchy food are generally low in fat or fat free, and low in sodium (except processed foods).
2. Starchy foods provide so much more than calories! The US Potato is a good example of a nutritious "snack." A US Potato rubs with the skin offers important dietary fiber, is rich in vitamin C and a good source of potassium and vitamin B6.
3. Starch is a form of complex carbohydrate, that's found in a variety of foods of all different colors.

FRIED THEY:
Pig Flavored Deep Potato: Put a handful of wedge cut potatoes into a pan. Drizzle with olive oil and toss with garlic and parmesan cheese to any seasoning you have. Bake in an open Potatoes on a baking sheet and roast, flipping wedges after about 15 minutes.

Complex carbohydrates such as those found in US Potatoes are necessary because they provide us a steady stream of energy. They are broken down more slowly than simple carbohydrates and limit the amount of sugar converted and stored into fat.

US Potatoes are a great catalyst for "sneaking" more vegetables into your children's diet. Try topping a baked potato with broccoli, mushrooms or salsa. Make your favorite slow-bubbling and stove beauty by adding potato cubes. The great thing about US potatoes is that they can be prepared in various ways to fit into any meal, any day.

For inquiries, please visit www.potatoesusa-philippines.com or www.potatogoodness.com.

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Shangri-La Plaza

## vironment

CEAAF

...to special rewards or incen-...to the top fundraiser raises, ...the support of the people ...ected to the Carnival, and ...nies they made from their ...ts.

...mmunity activities included ...Elements for the children, a ...show with the pets contested ...ermanauan dressed outfits,

**SMLT workers and jugglers roam the Banaoang grounds**

...rapoints demonstrations and pot dances. The Mall of Asia's fireworks display signaled the start of the evening's festivities.

Marc Nelson and Ibrahim Hernandez hosted the party with special crumbers from HSBC's dancers and band champions. Upcoming band Enemies of Gamers pumped the crowd for the main event of the night—a mini-concert by Humbers.

HSBC's environmental and educational programs don't stop with the Ebanaoan Carnival; it has more scheduled activities for the rest of the year. These include Sitting Ongin, a program to re-...operation with CEAAF to help preserve cicadas life.

Climate warming, energy efficiency, and recycling are among the main areas of the activities HSBC is actively implementing.

For more information on the company's corporate social responsibility initiatives, visit http://hsbc.com.ph

# 24/7 SUPER RADAR

By Janine Conoza-Dizon
and Giancarlo Esperanza

WHEN IT COMES TO THE human body, the foot hardly occupies a place of eminence. It gets dog tired, pinched in closed shoes and scrunched all crying to kill its master at the end of the day. But the fact that a quarter of the human bones are found in the foot means that the latter deserve a little more attention. This week, get your feet to bring you to three events that will amaze you as what even the most ignored body parts can do.

### En Pointe

Artists is captured at **Dance**, an exhibit by Ferdinand Cacnio at the Alliance Francaise de Manille located at **108 Nicanor Garcia Street, Bel-Air 2, Makati City**. See the artist's various interpretations of movement through an eight-piece collection of dance sculptures and 11 works on paper. The exhibit is on display **until June 15**. For more information, call 895-7560 or 895-7440.

### Walking Boots

Can the right pair of shoes help you find true love? Watch the film **Baked** on Wednesday, **June 3**, and see if there is a Cinderella ending to this bustling story about a boy and his desire to own a pair of working boots. The screening is followed by a Q&A with the film's director, Benji Garcia. Both events are set to take place at the **Alliance Francaise Festive Auditorium** located at 108 Nicanor Garcia Street, Bel-Air 2, Makati City. For more details, contact Alliance Francaise de Manille (T. 895-7560, www.alliance.ph).

### Dance Master

**Gary Valenciano** isn't called Mr. Pure for copy for nothing. On Friday, **June 5**, watch

him bring the house down with his smooth vocals and just-so-smooth dance moves in **2009Gawad Sa Casinel Series** at the Ron Rafael Theatre Center for Performing Arts at La Salle Greenhills, Ortigas Avenue, Mandaluyong City. The second part of the series is scheduled for Monday, June 8. Proceeds of the events are for the benefit of Gwi La Salle Scholarship Fund and Bahay Ing-ina. For tickets, please contact Ticketworld (T.891-9999, www.ticketworld.com.ph).

Information is subject to change without prior notice. For more information on events, log on to www.org24-7.com or pick up your free copy of 24/7 Showmall Navigator at your favorite malls, bars and restaurants. You may also text 24/7 gigs to 7000 for Globe, 206 for Smart and 2015 for Sun. Submit your schedules before Tuesday to events@org24-7.com and aisa247@gmail.com for inclusion in the column.

## Family entertainment center has new outlets

THE LEADING FAMILY ENtertainment center, Timezone, is open over 50 locations nationwide.

Its newest outlet is at Eastwood Mall, Libis, Quezon City, which has the latest game machines—Tekken 6, Mortuous Tune 3, Pang Pang Paradise, Street Basketball, Terminator's ambush game Devil or No Devil.

There's also Timezone at SM Bicutan, Pampanga, on the ground level near the mall's main entrance—the fourth to open at SM Malls. Other outlets are at SM Megamall, SM San Lazaro and SM Mall of Asia. Timezone SM Bicutan has popular game machines such as Tekken 6, Mortuous Tune 2, Paradise Lost, Alien Extermination, Pang Pang Paradise, Hotshots, Dribble Mania Neo, among others.

The newly developed QP Aralal and Technofitch at the University of the Philippines North Science and TechPark, Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City has Timezone on the 2nd level. It is drawing students from nearby campuses, call center agents and IT professionals. It has game machines such as Tekken 6, Bloodline Rebellion, Mortuous Tune 2, Paradise Lost, Street Ball, Pang Pang Paradise and the Timezone-exclusive Devil or No Devil.

Timezone at SM City Baguio is the 54th to open.

All three new stores use the Powercard® system for easy-to-use cards. There are special edition Pinoy-themed cards, authentic Disney prizes, exclusive Disney-theme game machines and Disney movie theme giveaways.

Leisure & Allied Industries Phils. Inc. (Timezone) is a joint undertaking of Ayala Land Inc. and the Australian-based Leisure and Allied Industries. Pty. (Ltd.) Australia. LAI Australia was established in 1988 and now operates over 200 Family Entertainment Centers (FECs) under the brand name TIMEZONE in Australia, New Zealand, Indonesia, Singapore, India and Vietnam.

26 LIFESTYLE
Editor Thelma Sioson San Juan Subeditor/Editor Pam Pastor

# Why I quit Plurk

I reached the height of addiction

By Pam Pastor

I SWORE TO MYSELF I wouldn't sign up. It was a promise I kept for months and months, even after one friend after another started joining Plurk.com.

Plurk, a microblogging and social networking website that allows you to post short updates and links, had so many of my friends hooked.

### Dancing bananas

But I still refused to sign up—even through they couldn't stop talking about Plurk when I was around. There was so much talk about karma points and dancing bananas and I couldn't relate at all.

I couldn't look because all my friends had all sex their timelines in private. And while I had friends who were nice enough to paste the most interesting posts on Plurk during TSS conversations, it just wasn't enough.

Still, I held my ground. I already had my hands full with my blogs, e-mails, Multiply, Flickr and Friendster (I wasn't even on Facebook yet at that point.)

I wrote this in my Multiply blog in January: "Everyone is on Plurk. And I'm still not there. It looks fun and I'm still not there. I quit Hi5, I quit my newest blog without anyone even knowing it was up and I'm still not there. People continue to send Plurk invites to my inboxes and I'm still not there. I can't relate to things my friends are talking about and I'm still not there. I want to shower people with dancing bananas and I'm still not there. I don't know if what I'm doing is sticking to my principle or just being stubborn."

SOCIAL networking at its most addicting.

### Plurk plunge

Soon after I posted that blog entry, I finally caved. I signed up on Tuskedtakes and took the big Plurk plunge.

I started to get into it, really into it. Plurk was the first thing I checked when I woke up in the morning. Plurk was the

NEWS UPDATE A2

GARFIELD

AL LIPIN

FUGGO BARDY

DICK TRACY

LOVEHONOTE

JAMES BOND

DIVINE COMEDY

BABY BLUES

TULOOK

MEN

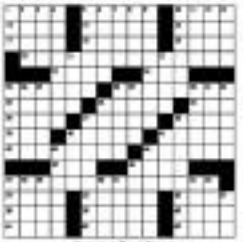
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BIKO MACHINE

## HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCES DRAKE

## CROSSWORD PUZZLE



## CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku — By Dave Green

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | 6 | | | 9 | | |
| | | 7 | 3 | 1 | | | | 6 |
| | 4 | | | | 2 | | | |
| | 5 | | 8 | | | | | |
| 2 | 9 | | | 5 | | | 4 | 3 |
| | | | | | 7 | | 5 | |
| | | 3 | | | | | 7 | |
| 1 | | | | 3 | 4 | 8 | | |
| | 8 | | | 9 | | | | |

Difficulty Level ★★★★

**HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU**

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | 8 | 7 | 4 | 1 | 9 | 6 | 2 | 5 |
| 2 | 5 | 6 | 3 | 8 | 7 | 4 | 1 | 9 |
| 1 | 4 | 9 | 2 | 5 | 6 | 3 | 7 | 8 |
| 7 | 9 | 8 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 5 | 3 | 6 |
| 6 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 4 | 1 |
| 5 | 1 | 4 | 7 | 6 | 3 | 8 | 9 | 2 |
| 8 | 6 | 2 | 9 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 7 |
| 4 | 7 | 5 | 8 | 2 | 1 | 9 | 6 | 3 |
| 9 | 3 | 1 | 6 | 7 | 5 | 2 | 8 | 4 |

# Why I quit Plurk

From page D1

last thing I checked before going to bed at night. When I wasn't in front of the computer, I was on Mobile Plurk, draining my plasma credits by posting Plurks (from the boring "Blahist waffle ever!" to the weird "Turbochicken is carrying an electric fan home") and emailing other people's posts. Every time something happened—if someone said something funny or if I saw a road accident—my instinct was to immediately Plurk about it. It got so bad that people started calling me by my Plurk name, Turbochicken is cute, sure, but I still like my real name more.

Because I was posting regularly and people kept responding to my posts, my karma points continued to rise. Plurk delivers points when you are inactive, when people don't reply to you and when people remove you from their friends' lists. The higher your karma is, the more characters you are given to write (a high-er karma allows you to modify your Plurk page more too).

Plurk had become the first page I open every time I go online...and that page stayed open all day.

## Addiction

During the height of my Plurk addiction, some of my friends deleted their Plurk accounts only to come back. The thought of deleting my account didn't even enter my mind then. I was having too much fun.

I refused to admit it but it soon started happening. My thoughts came in 140-character nuggets. Writing became a struggle. Plurk had become too big a distraction. I was constantly getting alerts on new posts and responses to my Plurks that it took me ages to finish a single article. I was also spending so much money on Mobile Plurk because I couldn't stop checking it. I will never mention this again but yes, I was even taking Mobile Plurk to the bathroom.

I reached Plurk Nirvana about four months after I first signed up. It was also around that time that I realized I needed Plurk rehabilitation. Still, I continued Plurking nonstop. I even joined Twitter just to see what was going on there but soon realized I wouldn't get addicted to it (not the same—not when I have so many closeth people following me from around the world just because my last name was Purser.

But after one weekend that made me realize that I was once again living so much of my life online, the very same reason that made me quit blogging for a time, I made the decision to quit Plurk.

That Sunday evening, in front of three people who were all Plurk addicts, I got ready to tell myself of my addiction. I signed in for the very last time, checked the "Confirm that my account will be deleted and this action cannot be undone" box and clicked on the delete button.

Just like that, Turbochicken was gone.

## Bye bye Plurk

The strangest thing is I don't miss it at all.

Sure, there were some great things about Plurk. It made doing surveys for articles a breeze, being aware of everything that was going on—from my friends' lives to current affairs—was a snap and it was so easy to organize nights out.

I love all those things but I love my time and my privacy more.

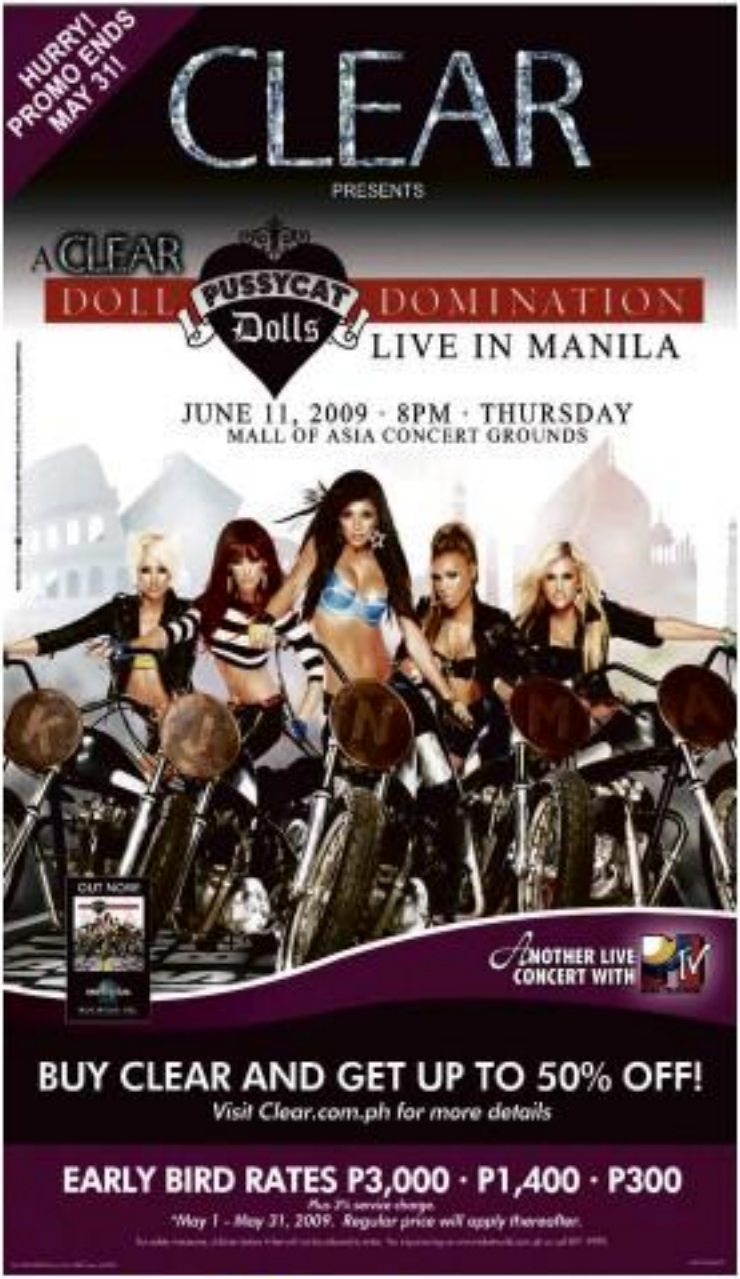
I write articles on multi-subject runs. And I've been having all these beautiful, crazy and interesting moments without feeling the need to immediately start writing about them in 140-character sentences.

My partner in crime said to me the other day "Since you quit Plurk you no longer spend so much time online."

"Yeah, because there's nothing to do. I check my e-mails, check Facebook, post my Flickr pics and that's it."

I like that. I like that I've had more time to work, hang out with people (without Mobile Plurking the whole time) and that I've been doing more things offline.

And for now, when I feel the need to give people short updates about myself, I always have my Facebook status. But none of the time, I just tell the person sitting next to me.

## GET YOUR GREEN ON AT THE TRINOMA GREEN LIGHT SALE!

*One look at TriNoma's façade and already it's easy to notice the mall's love for nature.*

Green is a recurring theme in the façade and literally in its name. TriNoma was named to symbolize a harmonious coexistence between nature and shoppers. We don't like the mall to lose sight of this, so we like to say that we are more than a mall—we are a place for the community and a destination for all.

It was May 16 to 31. We had a great weekend. We chose to host the environment for this May also and play at the TriNoma Green Light Sale Carnival. The sale with a green theme. The event was almost thousand to get up to 70% discounts on shopping plus select sales three things activities and not to mention!

**Prizes need green shoppers**

The excitement doesn't end there. Shoppers will not get a chance to qualify for the Green Raffle where they can win cool prizes while shopping in the Green Sale. Each to receive to win a total of 20 items worth green shoppers including Fiesta, Nokia Netbook, Cocktail Ring bags, Mini Blackfan, and more! All to celebrate. Every P 1,000 shopper in mall receives a raffle coupon to be a raffle coupon that is equivalent to a P 1,000 shopper to spend. Winners were announced on the occasion, May 31st. The drawing was also televised to actually announce the five winners in a special show on the 31st. Be sure to be there. Raffle make sure to visit TriNoma at the Activity Center.

**Need to run for the Green Flight home**

The 4-day sale also had a lot in store for shoppers. All in line with their environmentally friendly theme, TriNoma had Green Friday, May 22. The whole mall of shoppers was asked to go out in their most environmentally friendly attire to bring a chance to win prizes. Shoppers were also encouraged to bring their own bags for the day. Another event is the Recyclable Fun on TriNoma, an event inspired by both at the mall on the fourth Friday of the month. Expect a lot of exciting activities to take the initiative to recycle and reuse. Green Living Conference Day will be discussed. Key speaker such as newspapers, plastic bottles, and other items, and other activities such as the Recyclable Fun Parade, a string of fun-filled days.

**Ready for green way**

During the sale, TriNoma is also proud to host the Green Photography and Drawing competition. Interested participants may submit their entries in the form of one (1) photograph or drawing with a green theme. The Green Theme is in collaboration with Green Globe Philippines.

**Shop to oversight**

Most of all, we'd love to see everyone continue supporting TriNoma. We would like to give shoppers a chance to enjoy a good time at the mall and enjoy the benefits.

What better way to celebrate in time, and to get green while enjoying the environment at the TriNoma Green Light Sale. This is one event you don't want to miss. Come on over and shop for a green cause!

For more details, visit www.greenglobeph.com and www.trinoma.com or call the TriNoma Concierge at 634-0303.

# Online choices, choices, choices

So many online services and so little time

**Miss Mark M. Sablan**
*INQ Correspondent*

ONLINE LIFE USED to be so simple. We had one e-mail account, we used only one messaging service, and Friendster was the only networking site around.

And then the boom. I don't know when or how it exactly happened, but all of a sudden, we just became disconnected with our online presence, and we turned aggressive to emphasize that we're alive and kicking in cyberspace.

When it comes to messaging, for example, we cannot in a point where having just one account wasn't enough. Whether we were online-lived in Google Talk or the ever-popular Yahoo Messenger, we found ourselves maintaining several accounts. After all, having multiple ones means several usernames to enter in our various nooks or even personalities, right?

Let me explain. We can say hello to some but not supposedly offended accounts (whom we'll jumble our names or even add our middle initial to name) in our backup account; create yet another (where we add a period or an underscore somewhere there) because we want an even more "personal" account for only close friends; and create yet another (where we add some significant numbers, like a lucky basketball team number or our "monthsary") for very "personal" use since our significant other knows the passwords to our other accounts. And oh, we never forget to create one with seemingly random numbers and apt descriptions of ourselves (hardshift, girlishgirlshirt, gymboy), which we reserve for chatting up strangers for potential other halves, if you want to be punchy).

Oh, and those are just for one messaging service. Because there are others out there, and we feel compelled to connect with all our friends and business contacts, we sign up with other services as well. Skype, for example, seems to be the best free voice chat service around, so we can't just ignore that, and we end up creating at least one account there.

**E-mail**

And then there are the e-mail accounts.

From all the available ones out there, we normally pick just one to use for correspondence. But since they differ in styles—Gmail, for example, has bigger font size) is more pleasing to the eyes because of its cleanliness, while Yahoo! Mail has user-friendly features like unlimited storage—choosing only one can be a struggle, which more often than not leads to the creation of multiple accounts. This brings forth some complications, as we all know by now, when it comes to things like the creation of a password. What password for which account? I need to change an account's password, now I need to change the others' as well or I won't get access. Forgot or forget it's, giving me e-mail addresses (Which e-mail address for who? My 12 e-mail addresses aren't fit on my business card), building a directory if just edited my resumes list in Yahoo! Mail, but I can Gmail more so I guess I have to edit that as well), and checking messages (Which should I check first? I don't have time to check all five accounts right now. I haven't checked one account for the longest time and it might get deleted).

**Some people use their e-mail** accounts as storage space too, so even if you use an avid fan of Gmail, if you want to use your e-mail account as storage space, **you might want to do it using** your Yahoo! Mail account because of its unlimited storage space.

**Photos**

For photo enthusiasts, cyberspace is the perfect environment. With all the photo storage/sharing sites available, it would seem like freeing up your computer's hard disk is an easier. And you have a lot to choose from—Picasa, Flickr, Photobucket, Multiply—but how much have these sites drawbacks, especially if you're using just the free accounts. Usually, the biggest problem is limited storage (you can always create multiple accounts though), and then other setbacks include not being able to download folders (but individual files, which can take forever), or not being able to resize your photos' original size. So before you transfer all your beloved photos to a particular site, make sure you have chosen the best one, because you might end up uncontrolled, and be forced to download them to your computer just so you can upload them again somewhere else.

**And what about blogs?** The choices, as usual, are many: Live Journal, Typepad, Blogger (now Google's first), and the ones we, WordPress. Thankfully, there is the option for us to cross-post, if we really want to maintain several blogs from various blog hosts. A possible problem though is how it's so **tempting to hop from one blog**ging service to another, due to those templates, features (not enough size themes, for example) or plain boredom.

**Lastly, there are the social** networking sites. Do you remember the days when we felt so confined between Friendster and Multiply? Since there's also Multiply, Facebook and a dozen others. Sure, we can subscribe to just one, but signing up in all of them would make us feel even more alive, right? **They are fun and entertaining**, and they demand a lot of our time and attention for very important things like changing one's status, uploading our latest pics, and accepting (or rejecting) friend requests. Oh, how they truly keep us in touch with others, but how they can create social as well.

More than ever, it seems like we're spending a big chunk of our day online—or be in the know, to be known. And while most of us log on for work, it is so easy to get sidetracked and just chat, surf or tweet away. **Technology might have** allowed the way we connect, work or spend our free time, but it's just and sad in the same time scary how our life seems to now revolve around the worldwide web.

More time online? E-mail the author at missmarkablan@yahoo.com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26 LIFESTYLE

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# Shopping you can **click on**

Three young entrepreneurs take local online shopping beyond Multiply.com

By Pam Pastor

WANTING TO SHOP LATE one Sunday night, I logged on to Code-Limited.com, a relatively new shopping website. I browsed through the site, which showcases the creations of up-and-coming young Filipino designers who have yet to hit the mainstream.

There are many interesting pieces—from ephemeral blazers and ruffle shirts to tiered dresses and bikinis. There are accessories too—pretty bags and colorful headpieces.

After minutes of going through the site, I zoomed in on my choices—the Cristelita Jersey Dress by DuBlare, which was available in red and black. I clicked on the black one, added it to my cart and checked out.

Immediately after, I received an e-mail from Code-Limited.com, giving me details about my order. During the next few days, I continued to get e-mailed updates about my order. On Thursday, my dress arrived and it looked just as it did on the site—classic, feminine and a little sexy.

## Young designers

This is what Stephanie Lo, Charlene Felix, Cherrie Ng-Lio want to do—bring the creations of local young designers to your doorstep.

The three met through the School of Fashion and the Arts where they all took short-term degrees. Stephanie was a Behavioral Science and Marketing graduate from De La Salle University, Charlene graduated from UP's Industrial Engineering program and now has a food business, and Cherrie graduated from St. Scholastica and pursued her own clothing label, Amorne.

The three learned at SOFA that a lot of local designers have a hard time getting a break in the industry because they couldn't put up their own store. Wanting to give these designers the chance to make a look in the local and international market, they put up Code-Limited.com.

Stephanie said, "Many young and upcoming designers join bazaars and consign their items. We thought that the Code-Limited website can provide a more permanent

SHOPPING E2

# Shopping you can click on

From page E1

platform for them since it's live 24/7."

They first put up the website in March. Stephanie admits that the Philippine market for online shopping isn't as mature as other countries yet, but they know it is growing. "It's getting there slowly especially with the push of those selling in Multiply. The future is online...you see more businesses adding online sites too. We plan to become of the pioneers for this."

### Word of mouth

Brands available on the website include Amore; Avenue Mensligne; Ova; Cocoon; Shiffon; Electric Cuts; Bevos; Pili; Element; Love Culture; Maisie; Marron; My Little Dress; Planet; Underwonderful Shantoosi Vida.

In the beginning, their clients were mostly their friends. Their business started to spread by word of mouth.

Stephanie, Charlene and Cleresa believe there's a huge market for Code-Limited. "The brands we feature on the site have different target markets. The price range is very affordable—P1,500 to P4,000 for a dress. People between the ages of 16 and 30 shop in our website."

So far, the party dresses are the big sellers.

While some of the products are also available at the SOHO Retail Lab at Rockwell Power Plant Mall's second floor, some designs are exclusive to the website. "You wouldn't be able to buy it anywhere else."

New pieces are uploaded to the website weekly.

### Hassle-free

Stephanie, Charlene and Cleresa love being young entrepreneurs for a very good reason. "We like that we're able to start a change. We want to start a different view of online buying. That Code-Limited isn't on Multiply—that is a more formal and cohesive way of transacting."

FABRIC CAPELET VEST by Electric Cuts, P1,375

TALITHA TUNIC TOP by Pluto, P1,500

PEPLUM SKIRT by Electric Cuts, P1,350

HANDSOME DEVIL TULIP SKIRT by Electric Cuts, P1,111

Payment can be made through credit cards, debit cards, PayPal, GCash and bank deposit. The website offers free delivery within Metro Manila and free delivery to other destinations in the Philippines with a minimum purchase of P3,000. And store does and the right fit are a concern of online shoppers, the website provides a measuring guide and also allows customers to try on the clothes for seven days to see if they fit (aside the exception of the makeup) and the looking acted.

Code-Limited's customary supervisor the ease of online shopping. "They are glad that it's hassle-free for them to shop," says Stephanie.

The site doesn't just aim to discover young fashion talents and provide people with the convenience of shopping on the Internet, they also want to help sustain the livelihood of local communities.

DOLCE VITA SKIRT by Glitterati, P1,650

DAMN LOVE Radical Affection by Arnoux, P4,000

DEADDEAT BLAZER by Electric Cuts, P1,250

The duo still have a lot of plans for their site. "We want to establish partnerships with fashion schools, organizations and companies that have the same goals as we have. We want to act as the online consolidator of all efforts to advance the local industry," Charlene said.

She added, "Code-Limited will ultimately and eventually be the one-stop shop for everything to buy and to know about Filipino brands and designers. We aim to list more if not all of the local industry names in our Fashion Directory and to upload soon a branded new items in our Online Mall every month. Expect us to reach you in your schools, offices and frequently visited establishments through the fashion shows and private sales we plan to hold."

They also intend to go beyond clothes. "We'll have more products on the site—like right now, we have mineral makeup by Rare Beauty," said Stephanie.

Stephanie, Charlene and Cleresa will not, since to be hard at work on Code-Limited.com, driven by their inspiration—the young designers. "The designers, the young talents, they're, ages ca, their creativity inspires us."

Visit www.code-limited.com.

# A Guy and his denim

By Lois Carla San Juan

MEET MARTIN DE JONG, 19. He may seem the typical shy and quiet, boy next door, but this former varsity swimmer from Xavier School, is a force to reckon with in the pool. He's also quite clever. It though—"I'd prefer to be thought of as the underdog."

A naturally gifted athlete and the oldest in a brood of three, he's focused and disciplined once he sets his mind on a goal. That's how he performs well in swim meets. Off the pool, you'll basketball and frisbee are things he likes doing.

He was part of the student council in high school, and even helped organize a "board up to bullying" campaign.

Now, an incoming freshman at Ateneo de Manila, he jokingly says the one thing he's excited about college, "is when the time comes my friends and I will get together to remember what high school was like." He loves listening to alternative punk rock, and a little of acoustic music. His feisty 8-year-old brother, Matthew is his greatest inspiration, would you believe?

**1. What's your jeans style?** Slim fit.
**2. What's your favorite brand of jeans?**
I like how H&M, Tough Jeansmith, Gap, Zara and Folded & Hung fit me.
**3. How often do you wear them?**
Whenever I go out.
**4. What do you like most about it?**
They're usually very casual, but you can use them on other occasions as well depending on how you dress up.
**5. How does it speak of your character and personality?** I'm the chill type of person.
**6. How long have you had it?** Around a year or so already.

# DC Comics heroes take over Penshoppe

"WHY SO SERIOUS?"

As soon as those words came out of the late Heath Ledger's mouth in 2008's phenomenal hit, "The Dark Knight," movie history was made. The Irish knight rose to become one of the biggest box-office hits of all time, and those three little words became the most-quoted movie line in recent history. Now don't what you call a superpower.

Now of the legendary DC Comics superheroes, cult favorite Batman and his eternal nemesis, the Joker, are some of the classic comic book heroes that have made the transition from juvenile and geeky to super-cool and must-have.

Penshoppe brings the DC Comics superheroes from the silver screen to the streets via Superhero, its limited-edition collection of T-shirts featuring DC comics heroes in hip designs.

Choose from graffiti-style fashion portraits and The Joker's haunting mask or wild scribbles. For those old school fan, retro Batman logos and iconic comic book art of The Riddler, another classic Batman villain, will add some serious WHAM! BAM! POW! SLAM! to your wardrobe.

Penshoppe offers a free drawstring bag for a minimum purchase of P1,000 in a single receipt. A perfect alternative to plastic bags on today's eco-conscious times, the reusable drawstring bag is available only at Penshoppe boutiques that carry the Superhero line of shirts.

# School's Cool at SM Stationery and Supplies

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The new Nokia 5130 XpressMusic comes with high-quality external speakers giving you the perfect reason to always play it loud.
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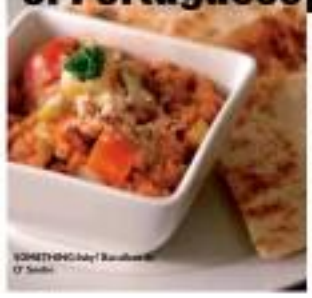
super LIFESTYLE

# A dream of Portuguese food

**A new restaurant on Jupiter Street offers a taste of Portugal with a little fusion from the rest of the world**



By Wiggs Calliga

WE ALL KNOW what Spanish food tastes like. We've been acquainted long enough to know how it has seeped into our own traditional cuisine. But what about Portugal? Magellan was Portuguese but Portuguese cuisine is not so well-known in Manila. Probably the most well known dish they've got is the cod (bacalhau), which is also Spanish, and that's about it.

Portugal, being the Western-most tip of Europe, is surrounded on two sides by the Atlantic ocean and has people set historically a seafaring race. Portuguese food is diverse (understated). That's owing to a lot of elements from different countries into their evolved cuisine such as the spicy Moorish (which is usually toned in Indian cuisine. Other than the seafood, they are also known for their Peri-Peri chicken, which is made of dried bird spices, and for their good wine. In fact, Portuguese wine has been recognized since the times of the Roman Empire and have been associated with the god Bacchus, the god of wine.

On Jupiter Street in Makati, O'Seafire offers traditional Portuguese dishes with a fusion of flavors from the rest of the world.

**Don't wake me up**

O'Seafire means dream in Portuguese and the restaurant and bar is dim and intimate. The name has hopes to "fulfill the

A CONTINUED ON F2

A weekly directory of the country's best establishments

## Where to Stop Where to Go

# Indonesia at the Heritage Hotel

EDDIE YEO, GENERAL MANAGER of The Heritage Hotel Manila with pastry chefs Yanching of the Indonesian Embassy, led the cutting of the "Tanjung" to formally open the 3rd year run of the popular Indonesian Food Promo—dubbed this year as "Indonesia Jaya and Everything Nice"—in partnership with Cebu Pacific Air. Also represented by Mikhael Jhon, VP for airports, a rainbow of popular Indonesian game chefs, Augustinus Aristo Saga and Mikhael Hermawan from Millennium Hotel Sirih Jakarta, were rebonded off to town to cast their magic spells in the kitchen for an Indonesian buffet spread, amidst an international fare for lunch and dinner from May 21 to June 7.

**Various embassy ambassadors** were spotted partaking of Indonesia's irresistible spicy and diverse cuisine that showcased traditional and magnificent history while appreciating the elegant performance of Balinese dancers and the colorful Wayang Golek, the wooden rendition of the Wayang Kulit or shadow puppets, recognized as the "Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity", artfully displayed at the Atrium Café.

Experience firsthand the sizzling Indonesian cuisine, as spicy as the ones served during the opening salvo, simply hop off to the Heritage Café and crack up your appetite for exotic flavors at the live rice bundling/tipping Bar and Traditional Indonesian Cracked station. Then lavish in seduction of spices that deeply embroils the palate.

For inquiries and dining reservations, call The Heritage Hotel Manila at 914-0888 or e-mail foodbeverage@heritagehotelmanila.com.

## Crown Regency's wedding packages

CHASE LASTING MEMORIES WITH JUST THE EXACT AMOUNT OF sophistication and grandeur. Hold your wedding reception at Crown Regency Hotel and Towers where each of their wedding packages is tailored to suit your every desire. To cater to your every want, they offer packages which include prominent features like a gourmet cuisine that's sure to delight your guests, floral arrangements per table, a two-layered wedding cake, the use of the bridal car, a bottle of sparkling wine for the wedding toast, complete sound system, a pair of doves, an overnight stay for two in a superior room plus a lunch buffet for two at Wang Shun Lo on the 20th floor of Tower 2. All these for a package price starting as low as P800 net per guest for a minimum of 100 guests. For Crown Regency Suites and Residences in nearby Makati Island, a couple may avail of a wedding package for as low as P630 net per guest for a minimum of 100 guests. Ko Ui Hotel Regency, Residences in Cebu in Guadalupe, presents avail of a wedding package worth P550 net per guest for a minimum of 100 guests. All these with their respective inclusions. Let your dream wedding become a reality. Make reservations now! For more information contact the Cebu sales office at (+6332) 341-8088 to 90, 418-8812, 416-3611, 418-3463, mobile 0918-8858-833 or 0918-8850-3902.

## All-Pinoy buffet at The Salo Hotel

THE SALO HOTEL JOINS THE NATION IN THE CELEBRATION OF INDEpendence from June 8 to 11. Experience a week-long fiesta of an array of authentic and delectable Filipino cuisine, made available at the Cafe Paraiso. Lunch buffet is P488++ and dinner buffet is P514++. Some of the traditional and perfected dishes from the menu include all-time favorites like kare-kare, kaldereta/pork/beef, embutido, pig roasted, lechon kawali, sinigang na hipon, pinoy bistek, pinoy adobo, pinakbet, bicol express, pochero/nilaga bulalo, lumpiang sariwa, bicol express, tinolang manok, sizzling sisig, bagnet, crispy pata, dinuguan, pancit bihon/canton, pancit palabok, sotanghon guisado, lechon manok, lechon baboy, lechon kawali, bistek tagalog, and mouth-watering desserts like ube halaya, buko pie, leche flan, sapin-sapin, kakanin and halo-halo. Located at the core of Salcedon City, The Salo Hotel is an ideal corner for special occasions, social gatherings and business conferences. For reservations, call (02)924-0001 to 71.

## G-Hotel's spectacular lunch buffet at Cafe Noir

ENJOY YOUR FILLED WITH EXQUISITE SUMPTUOUS SPREAD OF buffet under a cafe atmosphere with a cool feel at the hotel's Cafe Noir every Thursdays and Fridays from 12 noon until 2:30 p.m. at P508 nett/person. Prices are valid until January 09. For more information, call (02) 526-0888 extension 167. G-Hotel is located at 2300 Roxas Blvd. Malate Manila. You may also visit the website at www.ghotelmanila.com.ph

## A Venue Hotel Suites appoints new GM

THE MANAGEMENT AND OWNERSHIP OF A VENUE Hotel Suites, in Makati Avenue, Makati City is pleased to announce the appointment of Ethel B. Bonito as new general manager, effective May 1. Bonito brings with her many fruitful years of experience in the hospitality and service industry. Prior to her present post, Bonito held various key positions in a like-star hotel in the bay area. A Venue Hotel Suites is managed by Seven Hotels and Resorts Corp. and is conveniently located at the Ayala Lifestyle City, 7839 Makati Avenue, Makati City. For inquiries and reservations, call (+632) 403-0888 and (+632) 403-0801. Visit their website at www.avenuehotelsuites.com and www.generalvenues.com.

**A GEM AT THE MAKATI PALACE**

Rarely do we encounter upon a precious gem, something covered by crustyness. The management of Makati Palace hotel awarded Salvador Jamoras, 24 years old and a regular employee his certificate of recognition together with a cash prize in appreciation of his exemplary service of honesty. Jamoras, a lovely newly-wed attendant found a bag containing US$600 inside one of the guestrooms. Without any second thought, he immediately surrendered it to the lost and found section. Indeed, the "culture of excellence", a social behavior among the staff, has once again been manifested in this simple act of honesty. It is a virtue that has been instilled by all staff. The Makati Palace Hotel, "your royal address" can be reached at tel. no. 899-4344.

## Fabulous buffet treats at Sparkz Restobar

AVAIL OF THE FANTASTIC OFFERS FOR MORE magical moments with delightful memories with family and friends at the Sparkz Restobar located at 30th floor of Crown Regency Hotel and Towers along Ocharda Boulevard, Cebu City. Dine in style and savor the true goodness of exceptional international and local cooking with a touch of cool tea. What! There's more. You can also access the City Experience adventure and enjoy one City Walk (Lodge Course or Citywalk Extreme). Offer stands at P699 for adults and P400 for the kids. For more information and reservation, please contact the Cebu sales office at (+6332) 341-8088 to 94, 418-8812, 418-881, 418-3463, mobile (+6391858) 0837 or (+6391858) 0850, or the toll free number 1-800-888-CRSNA.

## *Dusit Thani Manila launches 'Dusit Hour'*

WITH AN INTENSIFIED GLOBAL ENVIronmental responsiveness, it has become evident that more and more things can be done to establish a sustainable humanity. Hence, coming from a successful participation of the worldwide Earth Hour campaign to save Mother Earth, the all new Dusit Thani Manila launches "Dusit Hour" so to one little way to persistently show its concern for the environment.

On a monthly basis starting May 30, a 120-minute hotel wide "lights off" initiative shall be conducted, and participated by the entire Dusit Thani Manila including of the DMT Fitness Center, Devarana Spa and all its restaurants and bars which will use no candles or flash. Respectively, Uno and Fiesta has dilipad and recharge able lamps for Buzz and Lobby Lounge. Hotel guests are also encouraged to switch off the lights in their rooms.

For more information, please call (632) 897-5555 or e-mail dtm@dusit.com.

**AUSTRALIAN GROUP ME DOES MALL TOUR**

Aircraft Makati hosts the energetic and fun-loving MD. The Australian musical group engaged in a mall tour in partnership with Ayala, featuring new songs from the children's program. From left: Debbie Galang (Aircraft Int'l Phils marketing manager), John Marion (Eastwood Suites Residence manager), Fely Irvine, Tim Maddren, Low Yee Ping (Aircraft Makati general manager), Casey Burgess, Lauren Brunt, Shona Nicholson, Marilyn Villar (Aircraft Int'l Phils director, human resources), Sue Pennebaro (Eastwood Citywalk Residence manager) and Lauren Delong-Gonsa (Aircraft Int'l Phils director, sales and marketing).

Microtel Inn & Suites

PORK BUTOK. Coffee-marinated pork

PAKI-PERI grand. The peri-peri chicken

# A dream of Portuguese...

PASHA is all downwards sights of Sangria

From page F1

dream" of all their clientele with excellent food that is quite unique to the city.

Just this accomplish this to-fold. The food is mouth-watering and unforgettable. The cutted Pumpkin soup makes a hearty opener; it is heavy on its own but the flavor is engaging and dynamic.

One must try the escallops and enjoy its subtle goodness. The Portuguese grandma as a bit spicy but that's probably how it should be enjoyed. Dishes like fried diced chicken parts which is delectable and utterly enjoyable.

But for a truly unforgettable taste explosion, ask for the coffee-marinated pork. It is simply incredible. The exam is tender and juicy and the flavor unlike anything you have ever tasted.

THE STARTER shrimp. Shrimps in garlic

BETTER than Lance Burn is an order of Sea Bass

I didn't get to try their tantalizing desserts because I was already full with the delectable entrees but the cheesecake seemed very interesting indeed.

And while Portuguese wine is world famous, O'Sushi+ offers a delicious sangria with an extra kick.

Having opened less than a year, O'Sushi+ has found diverse yet loyal clientele in the metro who constantly return to try and sample all the delicacies on the menu. The restaurant is open until late that makes it an extremely chic people who want to relax and wine for the rest of the evening.

O'Sushi+ is located at #29 Jupiter Street, Makati (0266 1686). Open Monday-Thursday, 10 a.m.-11 p.m.; Friday and Saturday, 10 a.m.-12 a.m.; and Sunday, 10 a.m.-11 p.m. For reservations, call 896.3289.

## Tours, Leisure & Chow

### H. Chervielle Hotel welcomes ABS-CBN star

H. Chervielle Hotel, the newest boutique hotel in Makati welcomed a celebrity guest recently in-person (from left): Ben, Emily-Jane (accounting, Mike, executive assistant, Nicole Park, head admin and operation; ABS-CBN star and host Wong Navarro, Jenny Locsin, the hotel's director of marketing and PR...and the staff of Dory from the Gift Shop of H. Chervielle Hotel.

### Suited to fit at Waterfront Airport Hotel

Harmonizing work and comfort, this district offer is specially crafted for the more discerning everyone. Book now and indulge in this quintessential mix of business and pleasure for P1,400 nett/s bulbs breakfast for two (single double) at Waterfront Airport Hotel and Casino Harrow. Waterfront Airport Hotel and Casino has added extended room options: numbers of rooms to offer you with and inquiries. Tel: 632-8339425; 632-2026888 local 612; fax: 632-2342587. You can also visit the website at www.waterfrontmanila.com.ph; e-mail: wahc@waterfrontmanila.com

### Two nights plus one at The Malayan Plaza

STAYCATION AT THE MALAYAN

Plaza can be so much fun and relaxing that guests would want to stay longer than the usual scheduled days. After all, with its strategic location at 4000 Ayala Avenue corner Epifanio de los Santos Avenue, the Malayan Plaza is perhaps the best place to be this side of town. From June 1-30, the Malayan Plaza offers a Two-Plus-One package that makes for an even more delightful stay. Book two consecutive nights at a studio superior room for P5,800 net or a one-bedroom deluxe room for P11,400 net and get the third night free. The package also includes buffet breakfast for two and access to the Fave day club with complimentary use of the fitness center and swimming pool. For inquiries and reservations, call (632) 756-0000, 3020634-3020 or e-mail malayansales@manilamanila.com.

### Stimulating vodka nights at the 20/20 bar

Friday guests will never be the same again at The Bellevue Hotel, the luxurious destination South of the Metro, metro party-loving heroes and gents can experience the exciting "Vodka Nights" at the posh 20/20 Bar, every Friday night until June 12. Experience a different flavor (some eight-at-a-per sample the vodka tasting sans Vodka Jet, Vodka Cruiser Raspberry, Vodka Cruiser Blueberry and Vodka Cruiser Lychee or special rates of only P100 i.e. Be there as early as 8 p.m. and enjoy an exhilarating evening of Vodka Blend mixologists and bar games! For inquiries, call 771-1488.

### Escape to Subic Holiday Villas

GET TO THE HEART OF THE LION TROPICAL ESTATES OF SUBIC. SUBIC Holiday Villas is a spring board to many activities and attractions for the guests on the go. With just a mere two hours drive from Manila, it's an easy route to reach. Four affordable yet conveniently equipped studio units to spacious condo-like for families, every dwelling is designed to make your relaxation comfy. Subic Holiday Villas is especially equipped for conventions, date business functions and conventions, with newly renovated function rooms that can cater to a wide variety of professional events. For bookings, you may contact: Subic Holiday Villas, George Emery Center Complex, Asinan-ce Heights, Subic Bay Freeport Zone, tel. no. (047) 252-3000; Makati Office: 2nd Floor, Unit 2-B, Cityland Condominium 10 Tower 1, 156 Valero Street, Salcedo Village, Makati City, tel. no. 620-3000 to 03, 620-9300 to 08 loc. 3741; direct line 404-0148 or visit www.sumiss.com.ph

### Father's Day lunch special at One Tagaytay Place

THIS JUNE 14, ONE TAGAYTAY PLACE WILL BE BONDING DADS with a chefs special for lunch. For P688++, enjoy a mouth watering delicious cooking of tuna tartare, roasted beef, pepper gravy and grilled asparagus served with poached egg. And for the main course, indulge in the chef's creation of pan seared rack of lamb served with rosemary shallot and port wine reduction combined with baked salmon maitake served in tomato beurre blanc sauce. Finally, an all-time favorite dessert, chocolate mousse, to seal it all. For reservations call One Tagaytay Place at (02) 584-4111 (02) 584-4168, e-mail gm@onetagay-taysuites.com, or log into www.sambag.tagaytay.com. Managed with distinction by Genesis Hotels & Resorts (www.genesishotels.com).

### Clawdaddy Crabhouse and American Grill

CLAW DADDY'S BIGGEST SEAFOOD FEAST: CRABS, PACIFIC LOBSTERS, fresh water prawns, oysters, Sea Zealand mussels, clams, sausages, corn on the cob, baby potatoes, all seasoned in a flavorful boil-in-bag with and served with delicious Cajun sauce. Clawdaddy Crabhouse and American Grill is located at The Ledge, 4/F, Shangri-La Plaza Mall. Bridge, EDSA cor. Sen. Gil Puyat Ave. For reservations, call 656-8726 and 66 Brentwood, High Street Taguig City tel. no. 856-4786.

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In many places in the Philippines, during the month of May, many processions are held in honor of the Virgin Mary. During this month, we celebrate Flores de Mayo (Flowers of May). Known to be a unique Filipino tradition.

This year, a bigger and better Flores de Mayo will be happening this month at the SM Mall of Asia entitled Ninos y Ninas De Mommy – Ninos y Ninas De Mayo, celebrating both Flores de Mayo and Mother's Day in one grand event. It's the fifth year that its organizer, Imelmaton, has done this to encourage the revival of this Filipino tradition and this year will be its finest. Flower offerings and coronation of Mary, magnificent parades with matinée, mannequin elegantly dressed in traditional Filipino costumes, and lots of wonderful children await everyone plus a special participation from the Going Bulilit kids and surprise celebrity moms. Who knew that so much fun could have something good waiting in return? Aside from its mission to bring the family and community together and wonder old traditions, this event is for the benefit of T.O.Y.S. (Thinking of You Street Children) Project 2009. What better way to spend some good old family fun right here in the city than this? Be sure not to miss the Ninos y Ninas De Mommy – Ninos y Ninas De Mayo at 4pm on May 31, 2009 in the SM Mall of Asia and join the festivities for a worthy cause.

Be part of SM Mall of Asia's biggest and grandest Kiddie Flores de Mayo and Mommy Santacruzan. Come to the mall and experience a wonderful Flores de Mayo in a mall like no other!

**ALWAYS CARING FOR YOUR PETS.** MOA's pet waste disposal units make sure you and your pet enjoy a hassle-free day at the mall everyday.

The furry cutie is all smiles for the camera.

Little Ms. Sassy Yorkie is ready to party.

## *A Special Dinner Date Just for You & Your Furry Pals at SM Mall of Asia*

### The PAWS 55th Anniversary Charity Dinner

Enjoy a fun-filled day of malling everyday with your furry pet pals at the most pet-friendly mall in the Metro, the SM Mall of Asia. Take your precious companions on a hassle-free shopping spree at the mall that offer grooming, apparel and even dining choices for every mom's best friends. And thanks to MOA's pet waste disposal units conveniently located at the North and South arcades of the Entertainment Mall, you can always enjoy an "accident-free" day of malling.

These innovative pet waste disposal units are equipped with litter bags or plastic bags and a trash bin that allow fast and easy clean-up after your pets. Making sure that each time you shop at MOA you and most especially your pets can enjoy all the conveniences that the country's premier mall has to offer.

In honor of the friendship of man and pooch, the Philippine Animal Welfare Society or PAWS is inviting all dog lovers to its 55th Anniversary celebration, the 2nd annual DINE WITH PAWS charity dinner. The special event shall be held at the MOA Music Hall on May 30, Saturday at 6:30pm.

Dress up in matching glamorous outfits then strut your stuff on the red carpet for a photo op. A sumptuous dinner buffet awaits pet lovers while your precious pooch can sample a unique Pet Buffet from ALPO Chop House. The menu features mouth watering doggie appetizers, premium entrees and a delectable selection of canine desserts.

The evening's main program shall feature the pawS Order of the Platinum Paw Awardees, plus special production numbers from PAWS' celebrity supporters. So mark your calendars and make it a special dinner date with your furry best friend on May 30th at the SM Mall of Asia.

DINE WITH PAWS is made possible through the generous support of Alpo Chop House and SM Mall of Asia. Special thanks to McDonald's, Magnolia Healthy Beverages, Carlito's Catering, Frontline, Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf, Krispy Kreme, The White Hat, Odor-Lass & MaxiCoat, Jolly Selfies and the Philippine Star Pet Life Section.

IN THIS ISSUE
■ Julia Roberts makes smashing comeback /G3

Editor Nestor U. Torre ● Assistant Editor Nita P. Rubio

# SATURDAY Special

# 'Bruno' highlights summer comedies

NEW YORK—At much as tentpole action films dominate the summer, comedies, too, are a staple of the season. In warm summer nights, waves of cackling have long floated out of multiplexes playing "Caddyshack," "There's Something About Mary" or "The 40-Year-Old Virgin."

Judd Apatow or cult-going with his raucous-romp friends to see Bill Murray in "Stripes" as "one of the great moments of my entire life." There are many gigantic movies with budgets well over $100 million that come out during the summer," noted Apatow. "There's a lot of excitement and spectacle. But, people also enjoy something less intense, fun and funny."

Apatow has become a summertime regular, having directed "Knocked Up" and produced "Superbad" and "Step Brothers"—all of which benefited from coming out late in the season, when people were "a little burned-out" by the blockbusters.

On July 31, he'll release "Funny People," starring Adam Sandler as a stand-up comedian who finds out he has a terminal disease. Seth Rogen costars. "It's a human comedy," shared Apatow. "It's about the normal struggles people have. It's funny and relatable."

CONFIN: Plays gay fashion reporter in his follow-up to "Borat."

## Wanderers

Apatow also produced "Year One" (June 19), which Harold Ramis directed. It stars Jack Black and Michael Cera as Roman Empire-era wanderers with gut problems.

It's not the only time-traveling comedy this summer. In "Land of the Lost" (June 5), adapted from the campy '70s TV series, Will Ferrell plays a scientist who leads his team (including Danny McBride) through a time warp and into an alternate dimension, where dinosaurs exist.

Then, there's yet another alien spy of Sacha Baron Cohen: On July 10, the comedian reunites with "Borat," the Jose Elm this year with an unclear (but American moviegoers are likely to flock to. The movie is Cohen's follow-up to "Borat," which, in 2006, earned more than $128 million at the domestic box office and caused a cultural stir. In "Bruno," Cohen

BRUNO/ G3

SANDLER (WITH ROGEN, RIGHT). Portrays a stand-up comedian with a terminal disease in "Funny People."

FERRELL (center) cuddles big-screen version of unique '70s TV satire, "Land of the Lost."

# 'Bruno' highlights summer comedies

Front page G2

again Kings a character from his TV series, "Da Ali G Show," into the real world, where director Larry Charles' cameras capture his interactions with seemingly unknowing citizens.

The culture clash of his gay Austrian fashion reporter might be even greater than that of his Kazakh journalist.

Coming on June 5 with less flamboyance and more homage to "The Hangover," about friends who find themselves trying to put the pieces together after a wild Las Vegas night, Rooney Cooper, Ed Helms and Zach Galifianakis as groomsmen looking for their missing friend. "It ends as a simple detective format, almost like a mystery. Like a family Bess puzzler," explained Helms. "You're trying to figure out exactly what happened."

## Chance

Both comedies afford actors and comedians a chance to hone a small part into a career breakthrough. (Remember McLovin'?)

"The Hangover" is the first major movie role for Helms, who graduated from "The Daily Show" to "The Office," and, now, to more movies. This summer, he also has parts in "The Goods: Live Hard, Sell Hard" and in "Night at the Museum: Battle of the Smithsonian."

"The Goods," which is produced by Russell and Adam McKay, stars Jeremy Piven, Ving Rhames and James Brolin. Other anticipated titles follow:

• "Taking 5." Sept. 4: Mike Judge's comedy stars Mila Kunis, Ben Affleck, Jason Bateman and Kristen Wiig.

• "Whatever Works." June 19: Woody Allen returns to New York in the comedy starring Larry David.

• "Dance Flick": The Wayans brothers satirize the recent slew of dance films like "Step Up."

AP

EXCLUSIVE
OPENS JUNE 3 AT GLORIETTA 4 & GREENBELT 3 CINEMAS

"A rock-solid biopic with a foolproof rise-and-fall storyline..." — VARIETY

"Terrific performances, powerful soundtrack & eye-catching visuals..." — THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER

"Managed to stun, unsettle & move me..." — NEWSWEEK

GREENBELT


LOTUS POND

*R. Valencia and S. Bismonte*

# Service and reward

[illegible] OF GREAT personalities have departed from our midst, their stories continue to touch us lessons and enlighten us in—like those one incidents in the life of Confucius:

One day Confucius and his students visited the ruler of the state of Qi, Jing Jing, an exceptionally powerful leader with many selfish desires. The king thought to himself, "I'm not so all interested in Confucius' teachings. But, people respect him...and if he works for me, I'll surely benefit from his popularity."

So, the ruler told the wise man, "Stay in my kingdom and assist me in ruling over my people. If you do so, I shall grant you a piece of land." But, Confucius politely replied, "Thank you for your kind offer. However, I must decline and move on."

## Principle

Later, one of his students asked Confucius, "Why didn't you accept the king's offer?" His reply: "I espouse the principle of just rewards for meritorious service. I was discussing this with the king, who tried to reward me even before I was able to implement his wishes. He didn't really grasp what I was teaching." The student then exclaimed, "I understand now...we must not receive rewards without merit."

Another time, a disciple of Confucius was given a political position. Before going off to his new assignment, he went to his master and said, "Master, I'd like to seek your advice before I go."

Confucius replied, "Be sure you learn the law practice diligently perform well. If you're blinded by power or someone tries to accomplish great things."

The student then thanked his teacher and left in peace to execute his job as expected by the land learned from his master.

# Julia Roberts makes smashing comeback

By Nestor U. Torre

JULIA ROBERTS IS ONE COOL BIGamedia star. Despite the height of her fame and about as the biggest female star in Hollywood, she went on leave from her stellar career to start a family. Other stars would hesitate to risk so much—but then, they aren't Julia Roberts.

So, the popular and acclaimed actress "gave up" stardom for a few years, rearranging other younger female luminaries to make their bid for preeminent stardom. If one of them had been successful, Roberts' eventful comeback would have been critically compromised.

### Rising stars

Before rising stars did come to the fore and clubbed up entertainers, like Angelina Jolie, Megan Fox and Kristen Stewart ("Twilight"). But, none of them was able to climb the top spot vacated by Roberts, so when she resumed making movies, the field was still wide open for her to reclaim.

But, most of her recent movie pertinent have been critical successes, so her fans have been looking forward to her first major comeback performance. After a long wait, that's finally come by way of the romantic thriller, "Duplicity," where she costars with British theatre first, Clive Owen, under Tony Gilroy's savvy direction.

In "Duplicity," Roberts and Owen play former top sleuths who are now in the employ of top business moguls who pay them a lot of money to engage in corporate espionage.

### Secret formula

Symbolically, they are hired to ferret out the top-secret formula for a new product that's expected to make billions of dollars for the corporation that is the first to launch it. As the corporate espionage plot thickens, however, the two agents keep contending each other at every turn, making everyone—the film's viewers included—question the credibility of everything they say and do—the movie isn't titled "Duplicity" for arbitrarial reasons, obviously.

To complicate things further, Roberts and Owen's characters get involved on a personal, romantic level, as well. So, how do lovers and rivals who can't trust each other manage to make sense of their professional and personal lives? The answer to that key question is what makes "Duplicity" a fascinatingly engrossing viewing experience.

ROBERTS. Slinky effortlessly bares sophistication in dirty tussling.

The good news is that, after her cameo roles in recent productions, Roberts' portrayal here is full-blown and meaty-layered, as she sidesteps an acting challenge that's big enough to engage a major star's creative abilities.

Even better she's found the perfect partner in Owen for a film format of this type. Their sexual sparks combine with energy and chemistry, as their characters look for the lie in the "truth," and deceptions.

Best of all, the crisscrossing actions thrusts in "Duplicity," that don't matter until deciphered in a film review, effortlessly shifting from explanations to daily bustling, to viewers' delight and enhanced involvement. Hollywood's Queen Julia is back on her throne—long may she continue to reign!

## Supply and demand

By Bebe Cervantes

I THINK THAT THE COSMETIC surgeon who floated his sexual organ capsules with some of his girlfriends to a think. He is unquestionably and guilty of lunacies of the most ingeniously kind, and his willing sexual partners are the victims. After all, those were private moments that should have remained in the confines of the bedroom.

Whoever distributed the doctor's sexual escapades is also a decidedly fools—and this is many regardless. The controversial video has become the talk of the nation. The scandal has since centered the bedroom. It focuses on every politician is getting into the act. So, what else is new? After all, we belong to a culture that publicizes scandals ever since international relations. But, even Monay Bocquier has been forgotten—and Abeg Ebanista, too!

### Biggest victim

So, the starlet is the spotlight has no doubt been victimized. But the biggest victim is the public, especially the youth who are receiving wrong signals from the perpetrator, his victims and the media. Why has such a scandal become a matter of national concern?

First, there's the economic factor. If there were no supply, there'd be no demand. To begin with, if politicians didn't flex their sexual prerogatives, there'd be nothing to supply the growing demand for such trash. In the not too distant past, it was considered wrong to patronize pornographic. Now, such practice has been legitimized as "adult entertainment" What hogwash.

### Wrong signals

Let's go get down to the root of the matter: I'm never upset or the wrong signals sent by many televisions talk shows. Gibb and Inquirer have given prominent display to sophisticated air by showing a liberal attitude. They note that what happens between consenting couples inside the bedroom is their business.

So, if it's "private," whatever those couples do is fine! Does that uphold traditional values like chastity before marriage, sex, fidelity? Am I connecting individuals, not personally adults, free to do as they please, as long as their acts happen inside the bedroom—and, for as long as there's kept secret by both partners? What if the guy has a fiancée or a girlfriend? What if one of the consenting adults never married?

No matter how modern we are now, Philippine morality still doesn't 'disappear' protected sex. Besides, these days, there's also an economic factor that contributes to the promiscuity that's becoming the norm among entertainers, who can afford an unusual lifestyle and the consequences thereof—but not their unpronounceable fees, who can't afford to get embroiled in unwanted pregnancies or single parenthood!

I sympathize with the paupers of victims, to be sure. I like and like the sinners not the sin. However, powerful media should not exploit the situation, as many politicians have. Instead, we all should put these events in the proper perspective. If real whore-women and properly educate the public, people will cease being a prey tattle and gullible readers for silly merchandise, like the sex videos now to the consternation of the nation nation.

### Third party

Although consenting partners call the "liberal set" private, it's the fact that they have introduced a third party—the camera—to witness their sexual encounter(s). Besides, people who enjoy voyeurism and other forms of perverted sexual pleasures still always find a way to get their hands on those videos. But, if there is no supply, there would be any demand—or all.

## Sharon cherishes precious . . .

Pretenses 04

Showtime recently honored ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp. and its subsidiaries as one of the top performing companies of 2008, based on the Fourth Corporate Governance Gold Scorecard Project. The annual event aims to promote transparency, accountability and good corporate governance to all publicly listed companies in the country.

With a grade of 93 percent, ABS-CBN proved once again that it is one of the best-managed companies in the country. It is also the only media firm in company to the top 15 of the reviewed rankings.

### Movies on TV

On HBO: June 1 at 1 p.m., "The other Boleyn Girl"; June 2 at 9 p.m., "Dil-lucha," June 3 at 11 a.m., "Legends of the Fall," June 4 at 9 p.m., "Transformers"; June 5 at 7:45 a.m., "Year of the Dog," June 6 at 5 a.m., "Shrek 3."

On Cinemax: June 1 at 7 a.m., "Friends," June 2 at 7 a.m., "Behold a Pale Horse," June 3 at 9 p.m., "The Others," June 4 at 5 a.m., "Ghost Rider," June 5 at 7 a.m., "The Sweets," June 6 at 5 p.m., "Hidden Camera."

### Last day for ManoMano sale

ManoMano's big sale concludes today, with up to 50 percent discount on household crafts from all over the Philippines. ManoMano is a Net Trade store that places special emphasis on the welfare of its vendors, who have helped set a high standard for domestic and export-quality goods. Visit ManoMano today at Lanuzon st., 3/o. Ave, near the Sta. Ana church, or call 564-4100 or 511-0998.

### New kid on the Orange block

Welcome Coop, the new kid on blockerhoton, in the new series, "Kid vs. Kat." He's cautiously at war with Kat, a stray feline. The show started telecasting last May 4 at 11 a.m.

And, weekdays at 6 p.m. starting May 25, "The Mighty Boosh," features splendid show Bonnie Higgenbottom, the world's most ambitious and lovably unhinged 9-year-old "Rosaybee" scout. For more details, log on to www.studyhall.com.

### 'A Very Special Love' on Viva Cinemas

The hit romcom, 'A Very Special Love," starring Sarah Geronimo and John Lloyd Cruz, will be shown on Viva Cinemas at 6 p.m. on May 23. The channel airs its programs like 'Chikaboom,' hosted by the number-one team of Dolly Ann Carvajal and K Mendoza; 'Daily Top 5' stars Mikki Bradioli, and 'Celebrity Home and Business,' with Christopher Morales. Visit www.viva.com.ph.

### Everyone's 'Unica Hija'

Sarah Geronimo has signed a three-year contract with the Star Music Union Hija fashion line and has agreed to showcase its latest collection. Unica Hija caters to young women who have only just begun to make their way in the world, women who are career-driven, yet also manage to lead active social lives.

### 'Generation Kill'

"Generation Kill," HBO's gritty uncompromising mini-series about the Iraq war, premieres on June 7, 9 p.m. on Silan. The new mini-series is based on a true story.

### MVC workshop show

New 'dance premiere in 2009 from our Workshop production, 'A Song for Tee Tribes,' directed by Mary Bhattacharya, at PETC Theater on May 31 at 2:30 p.m. Call 896-5405.

### Pets in the City

It's a fun filled and pampering experience for dogs, owners and kids on May 31 at SM North Edsa The Block.

Join the original rules of "Beverly Hills Chihuahua" to get these perks and freebies: free dog services, free pampering services for the owners, fun activities for kids (pagpa-cliquet and playground), free foodbags, dog balloons and photo fee all.

You are also invited to watch the Global Chihuahua Fashion show by the Chihuahua Federation of the Philippines at 4 p.m.

# The many funny states of Tracey Ullman

ULLMAN parodies life in the US in her hit TV series, "States of the Union."

LOS ANGELES—A RECENT interview with Tracey Ullman about "State of the Union," her latest hit TV series in which she impersonates famous people and regular folks in the parodies life in sketches, sets like something a private dicks The British comedienne, who lives in the US, launched into samples of her household portrayals of such celebrities as actress Bessie Zellweger, political pundit Arianna Huffington and former First Lady Laura Bush.

With her husband, producer Allan Mickleson sitting in the room, the mother of two offered a glimpse of the private Tracey as the acknowledged her hubby's presence. Excerpts of our interview:

**What kind of feedback do you get from people you interviewed?**

No, there's nobody. I wouldn't interrupt if I thought I had a good take on that person. Sometimes, we'll suggest a character, then I'll just say, "But, that person is in such distress, or what would the joke be?" You don't want to just humour it home and be incredibly cruel. You want to find some hope in things. There isn't a mean-spirited quality to the comedy I do—there has never been. I really love people—and I like interviewing them. Sometimes, it has gotten a bit cruel or gone across the line, but I've never had any undue complaints.

**Who did you most respect impersonating when you were a child?**

Shirley Maclaine (a French singer) used to make me laugh. I couldn't speak French, but I used to be fascinated by her hair doing ing in her lip gloss. I would pretend to be her as I wore my mother's nightdress on the windowsill. I also did Julie Andrews' "Sir Cumin, they're just children, you a does a female does."

I also used to impersonate a dear lady who lived opposite us, Annie Cox, who lost her fiancé in the First World War. She always had something just hanging on her nose. This little bright spinster was always told she'd never be married, so she'd be a nelli. She broke my heart.

**Can you say something about the JK Rowling episodes? Was even had Laura Bush talking about getting hooked Wi to read the "Harry Potter" books.**

She's not the third one on us, "The Goblet of Fire," she's just having trouble with the words (laughter) and I'm walking him through them. I noticed there was a lot of litigation about the "Harry Potter" things within America, so we decided to put on a five-star litigation team. JK Rowling is a bit of a bitch in it, but I liked her book—and there's nowhere to run. When she talks, she's obviously someone who didn't think she'd ever be famous...like when she accepted that thing at Harvard. I like the way she has come up.

**Legacy**

I looked like her at some point—fat and spots. I got that from the sheer fear of being in a coffee shop, and that she was a single mom. It just seemed right that someone like Bessie Zellweger would want to be this inspirational, winsted woman in a movie. We'll be watching someone making a movie of JK Rowling's book, but getting to the middle of the country and finding people doing Quidditch sticks. She'd be saying, "That's interesting with my legacy."

**Was there a time in your life when you stopped in your tracks and forgot about being funny?**

I didn't think much was funny on 9/11. That was a tough time.

**How have your children benefited or adjusted from growing up in England and the United States?**

You're never satisfied with one place anywhere. It's weird—I love England and I love the States. When I'm here, it's just so easy. Imagine hooves now, they're getting you the contrivance and sweaters. There's all that history—and the churches to visit. When I'm there, they don't get why we, I think, I've got to get back to the States! "You don't get wrong! What's the matter with you?" (laughter) You're never happy.

My daughter is very pro-British. She went to university there. She works for the General Secretary of the Labor Party in England. We're very proud of her. It is her dream job. Mabel wants to rule the world, but she has an enormous likeability, too. I also have a European and American sensibility. But, sometimes I feel 75 percent more American. Our son, Johnny was born here. He's now in high school here, but he still has an incredible English accent. It's amazing!

**Is your husband in the rooms, but can you talk about him anyway?**

My husband Allan and I have been together for 25 years. My life didn't begin until I met him. I love him so much. He let me do what I wanted to do. He was very supportive. He's funny, he's brave, tenacious and bold. He was always looking to do something bigger. I didn't work with my husband initially on a production level when I first came here, but I'm so glad I do now. It's like shorthand between us. He's the funniest person in our family. He may look a bit shy—not.

Allan: You have to be careful when you make subjective remarks.

**You're turning 50 this year. What are your thoughts on aging?**

**Dignity**

There's real fear of aging in this country, which I don't share. It seems to be an American nightmare, especially for women. There's nothing worse than a woman trying to look like she did when she was 32 when she is 58. It's like, "Have some dignity, guys—just go with it!" Yes, I do have a big birthday coming this year.

I based my career from the very beginning on people like Maggie Smith, Judi Dench and Margaret Rutherford. I keep thinking Maggie and Judi are going to eventually not want those parts and I'm going to move up and take them (laughter). So, hopefully, I'll be working in my 70s and 80s. You know character actresses. I never had looks to lose. I could keep going—Meryl Streep and me.

As a kid, home did you celebrate your birthday, which was born in the middle of winter?

I have the shittiest birthday—the 20th of December! Can you imagine what that was like when I was a kid in England? It was the day before New Year's Eve. It was horrible! My sister's birthday is on the fourth of July. It was all about strawberries and dancing in the garden in summer dresses. Mine was like, "Don't talk about it. It's her birthday." It was pitch dark. (laughter). Every one wrapped presents for me that they didn't want from Christmas. It was a terrible time to have a birthday! (laughter)

E-mail comments: STARFeatures.com, and read his blog, "The Angeles Report," on http://blogs.inquirer.net/angelesreport

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NOW SHOWING

## Man-vs-machine debate rages on

By Rico P. Aulic

**"Terminator Salvation"**
★★½
© Christian Bale

THOSE DAYS, IF YOU VISIT SOME of Metro Manila's technologically top malls and leave your vehicles in their computerized parking buildings, you can't help but notice that some of the human service crew who had once manned those narrow stalls have been replaced by machines. It's hard not to get impressed by these gadgets' efficiency and time-saving.

Twenty-five years ago, when James Cameron's "Terminator" first came out in theaters, there weren't any of these high-tech innovations—and we know only too well there'd be more changes to come, will instead labor soon be ruling of the past?

**Cautionary**

Well, "WALL-E" thinks it's not such a far-fetched idea. There's cautionary animated feature clearly premised its argument in this regard. Cameron's decidedly futuristic sci-fi flicks certainly perpetuates the debate between man and machine. The limited discussion rages on in the franchise's action-packed fourth installment, "Terminator Salvation".

The year is 2010. In this not too distant future, the artificially intelligent computer network Skynet, has decimated much of humanity in a nuclear holocaust. Visionary figure, John Connor (Christian Bale), enlists the Tech-Com human resistance movement in its struggle for survival and dominance. But the rebel movement has to find a way to disable Skynet's almost invincible machines in remote enemy.

To prevent Connor and his allies from rebuilding the war, Skynet sends a different version of cyborg assassin known as Terminator—best-selling the T-800 (Arnold Schwarzenegger in a CG cameo)—to finally get rid of the resistance. In the midst of this chaos is Marcus Wright (Sam Worthington), who's torn between his human past and his allegiance

MALE. Plays visionary freedom fighter, John Connor.

to his present "nature."

**Subject matter**

McG turns up the action in this resolutely presented remake. To be fair, the movie's premise is engaging enough. In fact, we find the premise—man-versus-machine subject matter permanently appealing, after three previous features, however, the productions left with little that's new to say.

Moreover, the frenzied storytelling style and swollen depiction of its characters leave viewers unsympathetic and detached from the protagonists' cause. The actors (Bale, Worthington, Helena Bonham Carter, Moon Bloodgood, Bryce Dallas Howard and Anton Yelchin at the young Kyle Reese, Michael Biehn's character in the 1984 original) aren't bad, but their roles don't require a lot of depth. If you like nonstop action and nerve-wrecking noise, though, you're in for a roller-coaster ride!

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Trinoma CINEPLEX 10
Ayala Malls CINEPLEX 4
TERMINATOR SALVATION 12:40 | 3:20 | 6:00 | 8:40 | 11:20
ANGELS & DEMONS 12:30 | 3:10 | 6:00 | 8:50
HOUSE 1:30 | 4:00 | 6:40 | 9:10
TERMINATOR SALVATION 1:20 | 4:20 | 6:50 | 9:40
NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM 2 1:30 | 4:30 | 6:50 | 9:30
Digital Projection TERMINATOR SALVATION 12:40 | 3:20 | 6:00 | 8:40 | 11:20
BESTFRIENDS FOREVER 12:00 | 3:00 | 6:00 | 9:00
ACCIDENTAL HUSBAND 12:20 | 2:40 | 5:00 | 7:20 | 9:30
ANGELS & DEMONS 12:00 | 3:00 | 6:00 | 9:00
NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM 2 12:40 | 3:30 | 6:20 | 9:10
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## Sharon cherishes precious moments with Frankie, Miel

CUMEYA (CENTER). Spends as much time as possible with daughters, Frankie and Miel.

WHEN SHARON CUNETA GAVE birth to her daughters, Frankie and Miel, she was determined to spend as much time with them as possible. "I vowed I'd leave movie scene I learned with my firstborn, KC, because I was so busy with my career then," Sharon recalls. "So, with my second and third daughters, I was determined not to miss out on those precious times ever again."

Time for both Frankie and Miel: It's those moments with mom.

Sharon says they cherish mom—whether it's eating, baking, doing art projects, picking vegetables or camping out in the backyard.

The Megastar shares that Miel loves breaking her shins. "At 9, Frankie can't have shiny hair or clear eyes if you aren't properly nourished. So, Miel's mantra is an important part of Miel's daily routine. Breaking bills can't be overlooked, especially when kids are this young. As for Frankie, she's very energetic. Where does she get all the energy? In addition to proper and balanced diet, she also loves to drink Nido Fortified."

Sharon and her husband, Kiko Pangilinan, are hands-on parents, despite their busy schedules. They take turns sending them to school and make it a point to attend school activities. "And, they keep reminding us not to forget to pray to God," shares Frankie and Miel with great appreciation.

**MONTAGE**

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# SATURDAY Special

PITT. Portrays leader of a band of Jewish-Allied soldiers who play a pivotal role in taking down the Third Reich in the revisionist war saga, "Inglorious Bastards."

## Pitt, Tarantino alter WWII history

CANNES, FRANCE—QUENTIN Tarantino said Brad Pitt have spun some revisionist history on how World War II ended. Their war saga, "Inglorious Bastards," premiered recently at the Cannes Film Festival, presenting a band of Jewish Allied soldiers led by Pitt, value play a pivotal role in taking down the Third Reich with a renegade strike against the top Nazi brass.

"It was definitely outrageous, which I've always gone for," Pitt said of Tarantino's rewrite of the history books. The band's exploits culminate in a bloodbath at the premiere of a Nazi propaganda film in Paris as Pitt's commando buddies enact savage revenge for Adolf Hitler's genocide against the Jews.

### Outcome

"People have come up to me and asked me if it is a fairy tale or a Jewish wish-fulfillment fantasy?" Tarantino shared. "My characters changed the outcome of the war. Stray that didn't happen because my characters didn't exist."

Had they existed, though, the events that play out over Tarantino's two-hour-and-40-minute epic are entirely plausible, Tarantino explained. The movie sets the stage for Tarantino's rendition of the war's end with a fairy-tale opening that reads, "Once upon a time ... in Nazi-occupied France."

For Jewish filmmaker Eli Roth ("Hostel"), whom Tarantino cast in one of Pitt's "Bastards," antiBellSilmore was not a strong enough term for the vengeance they take. "For me, it's like kosher porn," Roth admitted. "It's something I've fantasized about since I was a child."

### Spy

Along with Pitt, the international cast of "Inglorious Bastards" includes Diane Kruger as a German movie star and Allied operative, Daniel Brühl as a Nazi war hero, Michael Fassbender as a British film critic turned spy, Mélanie Laurent as a French Jew hiding under the occupation, Gedeon Burkhard as Hitler and Sylvester Groth as right-hand man, Joseph Goebbels.

Christoph Waltz offers the film's standout performance as a cinderyish German "Jew hunter," a sometimes, yet ghoulishly charming, Nazi Hitler who played Austin Powers, does an English accent again as a British intelligence officer orchestrating the Bastards' climactic mission.

Tarantino came to visit Pitt last summer with the script in hand. Pitt said the two talked about movies deep into the night. "I got up the next morning and saw five empty wine bottles," Pitt recalled. "Apparently, I agreed to do the movie, because six weeks later, I was in a uniform...I was Lt. Aldo Raine."

Debuting in theaters in August, "Inglorious Bastards" was one of 20 films that competed for the Palme d'Or at this year's Cannes film fest. Tarantino won the Golden Palm for 1994's "Pulp Fiction." AP

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# Allen, Lambert ready to launch careers

ALLEN (LEFT) AND LAMBERT: The future is bright for the winner and runner-up of "American Idol's" eighth season.

LOS ANGELES—KRIS ALLEN said his "American Idol" victory wasn't after his main logic or reason. Allen, who has been married for eight months, said he and wife Katie are ready to start the challenges of fame. "Things are definitely going to change, but we're strong, and she's ready, and so am I. We don't have any questions that everything's going to be fine," Allen told a news conference recently.

## Duet

The 23-year-old from Conway, Arkansas, said he plans to stick with music such as "Hey Soul Sister," the kind that "moves people." The song was among more than 1 million downloads that helped him clinch the "American Idol" title. He doesn't want people to be misled by his duet with British Urban on the show's finale: He's not going runaway. "That's not my cup of music and not the feeling that I want to my album," he shared, adding that he respects Urban and enjoyed performing with him.

Allen said he was "shocked" as host Ryan Seacrest announced he got to the early stages of the "Idol" competition, but realized it ended that night. "For me, that's kind of the way I like my life. I'm laidback and low-key, but every once in a while, I trick my head out. That's how I did the competition, and it seemed to work out."

He paid tribute to runner-up Adam Lambert, calling him "one of the most gifted performers" he's ever met and a "great guy."

Lambert said he was fine with the runner's outcome. "I'm thrilled that I get to move this weird and have a career in the recent industry," Lambert shared. "That's why I auditioned for the show, and that's really what kept pushing me for world. That's why I feel I still won. I don't feel like side of fame or any and place matters at this point."

He's looking forward to starting work on his first album and plans to do it his way. "I don't want to just rest back and let everyone artist and keep him stuck to one genre. Obviously, we want the album to have a cohesive sound, but it can be a collection of different styles—with me at the center of it," he explained.

## Focus

He'll focus on music but isn't tossing his hunk on the future, where he's appeared in musicals, including a road tour of "Wicked." "Of course, I can see myself going there eventually. That's my family, and I will in no way ever forget my roots," Lambert beamed. AP

# Genuine talent over lung power in new talent search

By Nestor U. Torre

LAST SATURDAY, MAY 16, WE reads were that we caught the initial telecast of "The Next Big Star," hosted by Regine Velasquez, on GMA-7, because we were bullish about its "mission" to discover tomorrow's singing stars. Since every other Filipino sings well, we were optimistic that the new singing search would be able to come up with a really promising batch of wannabes.

After the show's first telecast had ended, however, we were no longer so upbeat. What went wrong? The first and most damaging factor was the wrong-headed view of some of the people who conducted auditions for the all- that "first" singing ability was a plus point for young singers joining the competition.

## Conclusion

We came to this conclusion after viewing the show, because we kept track of the "hits" performers featured, and found that the majority of the contenders who made it to the TV show were first-singing superstars.

Truth to tell, we felt sad to hear raw young singer after another screaming, screeching and bleating out all those high notes in their trembly attempt to impress both judges and viewers.

The overwhelming preponderance of first belters was proof of the wrongheaded musical values prevalent in these parts. We hoped that the program's directors, stunned by the ears would rethink their own musical values—for the sake of all those millions of young singing wannabes out there whose musical future is in danger of being sorely compromised and damaged by the first bright.

VELASQUEZ: Hosts GMA-7's "The Next Big Star."

Now, for the good news: Last May 23, the show cut its auditionees down to 40, and many of the first singers didn't make the cut. Many of the 40 who did remained sensible and promising, as "The Next Big Star" could turn out to be a good showcase for some really interesting and outstanding talents.

This early we can spot some five or six semifinalists who can give them trouble in the music industry's latest star discoveries. They possess the unique combination of looks, talent and charisma that spell musical stardom in these parts.

Now that most of the first bets have been canvassed out, we thank the show's board of judges for bowing genuine talent over show lung power. We trust that other young singers will take note of their generally judicious preferences for real talent and similarly favor harmony over noise in their wan approach to singing.

RETIREMENT: Mila Del Mar (left) with sister-in-law, Diana, and niece Marissa

# Fruitful life despite disability

ANGELA OCA MARCOS is over 80 years old. She's a retired teacher who taught for 32 years at the California Santa Maria Public School district. (Santa Maria is adjacent to Santa Barbara, California, where I attended photography school.) She handled intermediate and junior high school students and has taught subjects like geography, history and fine arts.

## Happy and contented

At this stage in her life, Angela is happy and contented. She loves listening to the birds chirping in the morning. She plays the piano and sings. She exercises and enjoys her walks in the park.

STREET SMART

*Mandy Navarette*

Angela was only 5 years old when she carried some firecrackers in her shirt and pressed them into a shoebox.

Unfortunately, the box exploded downstairs and the incident left her blind. She later attended the School for the Deaf and the Blind in Manila. Despite her disability, the optimistic octogenarian has managed to live a fruitful life.

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1 TERMINATOR: SALVATION
2 NIGHT at the MUSEUM 2 / TERMINATOR: SALVATION
3 HOUSE / NIGHT at the MUSEUM 2
4 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM 2
5 ANGELS & DEMONS
6 TERMINATOR: SALVATION
7 MOUNTAIN SPIRIT
8 BFF: BESTFRIEND FOREVER
9 TUTOK
10 AGATON & WINDY

### ERMITA

Museum

1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM 2
2 TERMINATOR: SALVATION
3 TERMINATOR: SALVATION
4 NIGHT at the MUSEUM 2 / TERMINATOR: SALVATION
5 BFF: BEST FRIEND FOREVER
6 ANGELS & DEMONS
7 TUTOK

### METRO EAST

1 ANGELS & DEMONS
2 TERMINATOR: SALVATION
3 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM 2
4 TERMINATOR: SALVATION
5 HOUSE
6 TERMINATOR: SALVATION
7 BFF: BEST FRIEND FOREVER
8 MOUNTAIN SPIRIT

### NOVALICHES

1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM 2
2 TERMINATOR: SALVATION
3 ANGELS & DEMONS
4 BFF: BEST FRIEND FOREVER

### PIONEER

1 TERMINATOR: SALVATION
2 ANGELS & DEMONS
3 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM 2
4 TERMINATOR: SALVATION

### STA. ROSA

1 TERMINATOR: SALVATION
2 NIGHT at the MUSEUM 2
3 ANGELS & DEMONS
4 BFF: BEST FRIENDS FOREVER

### LIPA

1 TERMINATOR: SALVATION
2 NIGHT at the MUSEUM 2
3 ANGELS & DEMONS
4 BFF: BEST FRIENDS FOREVER

### DASMARINAS

1 NIGHT at the MUSEUM 2
2 TERMINATOR: SALVATION
3 ANGELS & DEMONS
4 BFF: BEST FRIENDS FOREVER

### IMUS

1 TERMINATOR: SALVATION
2 NIGHT at the MUSEUM 2
3 ANGELS & DEMONS
4 BFF: BEST FRIENDS FOREVER

### ANGELES

1 TERMINATOR: SALVATION
2 BFF: BESTFRIEND FOREVER
3 ANGELS & DEMONS
4 NIGHT at the MUSEUM 2

### STARMILLS

1 NIGHT at the MUSEUM 2
2 DEO NA SI LOLO
3 BFF: BEST FRIENDS FOREVER
4 ANGELS & DEMONS
5 TERMINATOR: SALVATION
6 TERMINATOR: SALVATION

### BACOLOD

1 TERMINATOR: SALVATION
2 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM 2
3 TERMINATOR: SALVATION
4 ANGELS & DEMONS
5 THE HAUNTING in CONNECTICUT
6 BFF: BEST FRIENDS FOREVER

### ILOILO

1 TERMINATOR: SALVATION
2 BFF: BEST FRIENDS FOREVER
3 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM 2
4 TERMINATOR: SALVATION
5 AMUSEMENT
6 ANGELS & DEMONS

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TERMINATOR: SALVATION

CINEMA 2
TERMINATOR: SALVATION

CINEMA 3
TERMINATOR: SALVATION

CINEMA 4
TERMINATOR: SALVATION

CINEMA 5
TERMINATOR: SALVATION

CINEMA 6
TERMINATOR: SALVATION

CINEMA 7
TERMINATOR: SALVATION

CINEMA 8
TERMINATOR: SALVATION

CINEMA 9
TERMINATOR: SALVATION

CINEMA 10
TERMINATOR: SALVATION

CINEMA

# Kylie Minogue dreams of film roles, not US success

**MINOGUE.** Fantasies about a credible career in the movies

NEW YORK—KYLIE MINOGUE has said (without) that the music video diva that segues to Britain and Australia has eluded her in the United States, but says the frustration about a result is Man Lorenzo.

Minogue, 40, who got her start more than 20 years ago as an actress in a Australian daytime soap, admits she has "definitely done the wrong things" when it comes to her limited movie career—and that's how to do more films.

In an interview to promote her first US tour date in ten years, the Grammy-winning singer said she dreams of a director crafting a role for her the way musicians Nick Cave developed their 1996 alternative rock duet and music video for "Where The Wild Roses Grow," which is now quite a moment to her pop roots.

### Unique vision

"Cave saw me in a different way, believed in me and had this unique vision for a number of years before we worked together, and it was unbelievably perfect," Minogue told Reuters. "My daytime fantasy is that there's a director somewhere who will be thinking that way, but putting it into the context of the film," she explained. "I would love to do more movies. I got sidetracked. I started out as an actress, and I thought that's what I would do."

Her first movie assignment was to "The Delinquents" in 1989, which was followed by a handful of roles, including 1990's "Street Fighter" with Jean Claude Van Damme, the 1996 comedy "Bio-Dome," and a small part in the 2001 hit, "Moulin Rouge" (for this kid a "dream come true" early this year when she worked with the Oscar-winning composer of "Slumdog Millionaire," AR Rahman, where she performed one of his songs in a Bollywood film.

Minogue's career also includes a line of fragrances, perfumes and a children's book. But, it's music that she's Minogue is to continue in fashion, her native Australia, Europe and Asia, where she is simply known as Kylie. She has 10 studio albums and a string of awards, including a 2004 Grammy for "Come into My World."

### Assumption

While her US success has been limited, Minogue says she's not concerned—she is more frustrated by an assumption that her career is not complete without it. She is perhaps best known in America for her album, "Fever," released in the United States in 2002, where it reached No. 3 on the dance and pop charts. Reuters

STALLONE ADAMS (BACK). Team up in "Night at the Museum: Battle of the Smithsonian."

# Programming innovation boosts IndieSine relaunch

By Rica Arevalo

TO BOOST THE INDUSTRY FUEL of independent films at its streaming venues, Robinsons Metrowatch is relaunching IndieSine next month. The Independent Filipino Filmmakers Multi-purpose Cooperative (IFC) is introducing a new approach to programming.

The following films will be screened in June and July: Gianna Evia's "Imbisyon" (Sheryl Sanchez), "Sanggano" (Richard Somes) and "Dose" (Brandy Quit); Gerardo Legaspi's "Bisaya" (Ellen Ocejo-Ko-Ho); "Bantay" (Tess Bienvenido) and "Hamon" (Jay Abalos, Eva Babb's "Bratpet" will also be screened.

### Time slot

Aside from its regular schedule, IndieSine will show a film during the 1 p.m. screening for a whole month. In fact, Jeffrey Jeturian's "Baby Ampalit" will be featured in that time slot.

IFC's Dee-Jel Mendo shares, "IndieSine was unexpectedly lacked last month. For over a year, Robinsons shared the burden of "competitioning" films—and there were many of them. Now, we need to take a serious look at re-timing."

Producer Bingo Temple notes, "IndieSine is still the only 'commercial' cinema in the country available to indie films. The new programming will allow films to run a longer course and give them time to develop an audience through word-of-mouth publicity. People will experience a different kind of movie in 'Baby Ampalit.'"

According to Del Mundo, the biggest challenge a filmmaker faces is booking. "There's about 100 many theaters equipped with digital film projectors. If you find a venue equipped with one, the next problem is how to get people to patronize your movie. In terms of marketing, indie filmmakers don't have the kind of money that mainstream producers have. So, we need to develop an audience—and that's where IndieSine comes in."

DEL MUNDO. "The biggest challenge a filmmaker faces is booking."

# Special effects overload in comedy sequel

By Nestor Torre

IF YOU THOUGHT "NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM" was an extravaganza of jaw and special effects, hence you'd for the sheer overload that is "Night at the Museum: Battle of the Smithsonian." You'll run a lot of familiar faces here—Larry (the night watchman (Ben Stiller), a trusty "Rodney Dangerfield" (Robin Williams), Octavius (Owen Wilson) and Octavius (Steve Coogan). The naughty capuchin—and they're joined by a veritable cast of thousands in a setting of equally impressive size: The Smithsonian, the biggest museum on earth.

In this sequel to the 2006 cult comedy caper, Larry is no longer a museum security guard. Instead, he's a self-proclaimed inventor selling revolutionary household items. (Hot the glow-in-the-dark flashlight). He's rich, but he doesn't seem too happy—and when he drops by for a visit to the Museum of Natural History, he finds most of his old friends in packing crates, awaiting shipment to the Federal archives in Washington, DC. Instead, he's bound for the Smithsonian museum complex.

It's a sad day for Larry and his friends, but before anyone can get too broken up, the displays get shipped to DC and Ardsley gives Larry a call. The capuchin has indeed the ancient Egyptian tablet that makes the whole economy in the rock-paper-scissors, thus, along with the rest of the Smithsonian, go alive.

### Residents

Unfortunately for Larry's old pals, one of the Smithsonian's residents is the evil, Egyptian pharaoh, the lisping Kahmunrah (Hank Azaria), who wants to get his hands on the tablet in order to conquer the world. Helping him accomplish this are Napoleon (Alain Chabat), Ivan the Terrible (Christopher Guest) and Al Capone (Jon Bernthal).

Larry flies to the rescue, and the supporters include Amelia Earhart (Amy Adams), General Custer (Bill Hader), and the Lincoln (Hal Holbrook). Ahmed Ahmed (Ahmed Ahmed) by Amelia. Stuff also encounter flying and singing stone tablets, the Tuskegee airmen, a bunch of Hessians and an enormous squid—this is the Smithsonian we're talking about, after all, and it's not just our museum, it's it!

As you can imagine, this can get overwhelming. The director and screenwriter—Shawn Levy, Robert Ben Garant and Thomas Lennon, respectively—try so much to many elements together that they end up losing track of their story.

### Exception

As for the special effects, they're impressive, but even they begin to wear thin halfway through the movie—with the exception of a particularly charming series of scenes in the art gallery, where Degas' dancers actually start to dance and Jeff Koons' "Balloon Dog Red" floats across the floor to its own balloon, y'know.

While the first film had the same tendency toward the maudlin, the sequel doesn't go to distended yet you feel it dragging at times. All the effective gags and funny exchanges seem to have equivalent duration, resulting in a movie that's only intermittently enjoyable.

Still, there are enough spectacles in "Night at the Museum: Battle of the Smithsonian" to keep the kids happy—and you can add to your own amusement by spotting your cameos in the crowded cast!

# Nieto and Trinidad, class acts

By Rito P. Avila

IF YOU ARE PINOYAL is double-of-the-cool pop and OPM stars but are fond of events and concerts where definition of powerful singing is spelt belting, "Philippine Idol" finalist Jan Nieto will rebel about it—at launch button. Often a rebellious attitude.

NIETO. Live-in sympathy and heartfelt passion.

TRINIDAD. Multiple roles in NYC's "The Main Name."

In "Jan Nieto," the young bellringer shines in melody-driven tunes like Vic de Guzman's "Isang Kanlungan," Ann Lewis's "Full in Love (With You Again)," Vehn Chavez's "Devotion" and Jovert Tan's "Langandaan." His silky, full-bodied baritone is perfect for Ogie Alcasid's radio-friendly compositions like "Sa Piso Ko" and the soulfully arranged "Buhay Kalangan (Isang Lamang)."

Jan's voice is so distinctively soulful as it is sensitive, and allows him to deliver his heartsong songs with flood-to-empathy and heartfelt passion.

Interestingly, in the catchy top track, "Kalimutan," as what it by songs with fellow talents, mostly classics, Gian Magdangal, Harry Santos, Bernie Tornado, Ken Dingle, Irene Cruz, Angie Dias, Pete Chavez and "Pinoy Dreams Academy's" Miguel Members, he willingly takes the back seat and lets his friends shine on their own. Somethat's classy.

### Formidable team

Just two years of the leader of the 1995-originated Filipino musical, "Miss Saigon"—a production that is especially memorable to us (along with "Megalift is," the longest-running self-given moniker in the country), not only for those of the formidable team that included director Leo Rialp, composer Ryan Cayabyab, National Artist Salvador Bernal, choreographer Douglas Nieves and producers, Celeste Legaspi and Gilda Baello, but also because it was our very first foray into the heady world of the legitimate stage.

Therefore, we acted with bad in 1995's "Fabulous The Musical," then directed him in 2004's "Cabaret."

In "IMC," which until its run at RCBC Theater tomorrow, he shares the stage with Tonee Abael, Michael Williams, Nati Zamora, Jess Delfin and Joaquin Valdes.

# Rash career moves decried

By Nestor U. Torre

WHILE WE URGE STARS TO keep surprising their fans in order to stay at the top, we must also note that some celebrities show threat their career by ill-feeling changes when none is needed. The supplementary shows this side to. If it ain't broke, don't fix it.

The first object lesson in this regard is provided by Bobi Cosio, the popular cohost of NBC's hit, "Today" morning show. For years and years, she delighted the program's regular viewers with her unique combination of intelligence, perseverance likability and ability to handle many different topics in the course of one telecast.

### Coveted position

A few years ago, however, Cosio felt like she needed to do something else. But, what job could be better than the coveted position of cohosting a popular morning TV show? Still, what about letting Get Her female talk anchor of a network's evening newscast?

That's exactly what rival network GIS offered Cosio, and it proved tempting enough for her to leave the "Today" show and transform herself into a news anchor.

When she reached in her new persona, Cosio did well enough. Unfortunately, the news program failed to gain the top spot on its time slot, and eventually settled for third place. That's not bad, but not as good as the top slot that the "Today" show has dominated for years.

After Cosio left the "Today" show, she was replaced by Meredith Vieira, who used to host "The View" and "Who Wants to Be A Millionaire?" After only a few months, Vieira made "Today" her own, making it easier for the show's fans to forget Cosio's and get on with their interesting lives.

### Consequences

Does Cosio regret giving up the "Today" show for her new career to broadcast journalism? Could be. But, the fact has been said and she has to deal with the consequences of her decision. On the plus side, she's won prestigious awards for broadcast journalism, so perhaps is all even-out.

More recently, new Joaquin Pinpoint also experienced the negative effects of a rash career shift. After winning hosts plum, this and awards as a dramatic actor of exceptional intensity and timbre, he announced that he was giving up acting in favor of a new career as a rap artist.

COLBIC (TOP) AND PHOENIX. If it ain't broke, don't fix it.

Well, when he made his first told in his new show his pervious, like his avian namesake, Phoenix burst from flames and bombed in a big way, whistling horrible instead of hurrahs. Oops, wrong movie. He shouldn't have quit his day job!

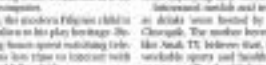
### Controversial

Locally, quite a number of luminaries have made similarly ill-advised career strikes. The most controversial one has to be Cesar Montano's decision to publicly renounce/said that first love no longer found his/her cars, and dropped her bombshell. The popular actress was whose bid to "go domestic" flopped big-time. The drama queen's office holed to "go easy" and ended up with egg on her face.

The popular singer who opted to live abroad at the height of her career. Since changed his mind and tried to make it here again—or so we recall...etc.!

Lesson learned: Know what you do best, and stick to it. Love your career, and it will love you back. Learn to look back before looking forward. And, count your blessings—as often as you can!

# Marikina launches larolympics



THE PRESENCE OF OBESITY AND FOOD diet among Filipino kids is rising. This was reported as early as 1995 by the Department of Health. Parents and policymakers (in the House of Representatives, among other things, the Committee on Basic Education and Culture, TV Media scholars) also point an accusing finger to the long hours a child sits in front of the TV or computer.

Unfortunately, the modern Filipino child is growing up alien to his play heritage. Because of long hours spent watching television, he has less time to interact with his family and fellow kids.

The childhood games his parents played are lost on his generation because of a number of reasons. He are consequently witnessing the slow demise of such well-loved childhood games such as patintero and tumbang preso.

### Response

Studio TV's response is to counter the many of the country's most child-friendly stars and teams to stage Larolympics, or teamwork to play (for girls), hardcore prize (for boys) and patintero (for both). The games are now being played between barangays and, by end of July, city contingents will compete with winners from other areas. The first edition involves Hakot, Marikina, Tagaytay, Olongapo, Baguio, San Mateo, Isabela, Iloilo, Bacolod, Iligan, New Lucena, Iloilo, Davao, Tagum, Butuan and General Santos.

Larolympics was recently launched in Marikina with kids in the following (aged 7 to 10) and (aged 11 to 14 years old) divisions playing their turns.

Interested media and invitees, as well as drinks were hosted by Ely Ahl, and Chengah. The mother beverage company, like Anah, TV, believes that, to engender a workable sports and health program, the parents are often dominant inspire and encourage to celebrate virtual and bright advantage should not be a crucial factor in playing.

Mayor Bimbo Fernando were a step further. She boldly declared that henceforth, her city would also be child-safe in terms of media. She outlined the resolutions that he passed by her city to protect children from exposure to violence and offer agreements among private and government agencies.

Among the interesting pieces of ordinance in place are disallowing TV viewing in public schools during the lunch hour, banning the sale of sleazy tabloids, as well as prohibiting children from leaving cribs at night.